

African Violet

MAGAZINE



Hybridizing for Beginners P.26

Why Did My Leaf Die? P.34

Pests and African Violets P.44

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■ African Violet Magazine

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African Violet MAGAZINE

Volume 75 Number 1

ON THIS COVER:
Rob's Lucky Stroke
Grown by: Kathy Lahti
Hybridized by: R. Robinson
Semiminiature
Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky



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African Violet Society of America

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Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.



President's Message

By Susan Anderson

Email: president@avsa.org

Happy New Year! I hope you enjoyed the holidays and are ready for the coming year. It is bound to be an exciting time filled with challenges and opportunities.

Although COVID-19 is still with us, vaccines have become readily available and many feel they may carefully emerge into society again. The pandemic challenged AVSA and local affiliates to turn to virtual options such as social media and hosting remote video sessions. I am quite impressed at how quickly our members adapted and became proficient with these communication tools. The challenge now is providing some combination of in-person and virtual space to optimize inclusivity. AVSA continues to learn and will adapt.

Executive Committee Meeting

The Executive Committee decided to meet in person instead of over Zoom during the fall. We got together at the Lone Star AVC show in Fort Worth, Texas. As the first event many of us have attended in way too long, I cannot express the joy and excitement that surged through that convention hall. There was overwhelming enthusiasm at seeing violet friends again. Thank you to the hosts for a most enjoyable and memorable time. It was a beautiful show with outstanding plants and designs, but I will remember it as a long-awaited family reunion that surpassed all expectations.

The EC meeting was very productive and resulted in many action items. This year, the EC will be collaborating with the various AVSA Committees to plan and prioritize future initiatives. We are pleased to

report that recent donations will enable AVSA to implement continued website upgrades and iMIS integrations and purchase equipment for the office. The Membership Committee will be conducting a customer satisfaction survey soon to gather input directly from the membership on a variety of topics. As always, your suggestions are welcome. Please feel free to share your ideas with me or any other member of the board. Contact information is listed on the inside cover of the magazine.

Upcoming Events

Work is underway for this year's convention in Little Rock, Arkansas. The Marriott Hotel and tours are awaiting our arrival. Convention registration will be available online, so keep an eye on the website. The Convention Chair and Director are finalizing the list of programs and speakers. And, as always, AVSA is accepting donations for the convention show awards. You are invited to join the fun. Let's go hog wild!

As venues are opening again, spring shows and sales are returning. These are excellent opportunities to get involved with a local affiliate, gather information and pick up a few new leaves. While we have a list of shows and sales on page 6, the latest information is on the AVSA Events page. African violet enthusiasts are eager to shop for new varieties, show their carefully-grown hybrids and share their knowledge on raising these beautiful plants. Mark your 2022 AVSA Calendar for the events near you so you don't miss out on the fun.

Happy growing, showing and sharing!



Editor's Notes

By Sophia Bennett

Email: editor@avsa.org

Change can be hard, and the last thing I wanted to do when I took over as Editor of *African Violet Magazine* was start making a bunch of changes right away. Now that I've had some time to settle in, I've started thinking about tweaks that will make the magazine more user-friendly for you.

You've probably noticed that we are now adding page numbers to the articles mentioned on the cover. If something strikes your fancy immediately (besides the lovely cover photo), you can quickly flip to that page and start reading.

Along the same lines of helping you navigate the magazine more efficiently, we've reorganized the sections starting with this issue. Each magazine will now begin with AVSA News. After that, we will include our feature articles for the issue. Updates on the AVSA Annual Convention will follow. At the end, we're doing a new section called Color Commentary that will contain fun, shorter pieces, such as quick tips from members and Rich Follett's AV Creative Corner column. We will continue to sprinkle photos of select African violets throughout the issue.

Now, get ready to dive in because there are some great articles in this issue. Many of you who attended the Cyber Diamond Convention last year were kind enough to take the post-convention survey and share ideas for future workshops. We've turned several of those suggestions into educational pieces. Joyce Stork has a terrific write-up on why propagated leaves sometimes fail to produce new plants on page 34. Debra Turner shares thoughts on raising trailing African violets on page 56. Several people asked about common pests on violets and what to do about them. You'll find that information on page 44.

Plants and people are
two of the things in life
most worth keeping.

In 2019, the AVSA office was nearly destroyed by Tropical Storm Imelda. It was a trying time for the organization, and one that was overcome only through hard work, great leadership and a little luck. I hope everyone will read the piece describing the disaster on page 6 and reflect on how it continues to impact the organization today. (For a lighter look at the history of AVSA, check out our piece on past *AVM* covers on page 16.)

All the way back in October, I had the pleasure of attending the Portland African Violet Society's annual sale. It was great to meet President Alice Wagner, writer Bill Chaney (see his piece on hybridizing for beginners on page 26), Wes Carter of the Wesley's series of African violets, Penny Eggleston and others. I was also excited to pick up a Kostina Fantaziia and Suncoast Lavender Silk to add to my meager collection of violets.

I hope you're feeling safe enough to attend some events this year. It's been really nice to see people (and plants!) in real life and pick up specimens that remind me of my new friends. This seems like a fitting pairing, as both plants and people are two of the things in life most worth keeping.

Have a wonderful few months and keep your ideas for the magazine coming. I always love to hear from you.



AVSA Affiliate Insurance Renewals

By Amy Carruth

Email: avsa@earthlink.net

AVSA liability insurance renewals have been mailed to the contact we have on file for each Affiliate. If your Affiliate did not receive a renewal in the mail, or if you have any questions about this insurance, please contact the office at avsa@earthlink.net or (409) 839-4725.

AVSA offers insurance to our Affiliates at a cost of \$6 per member. Payments must be made before we can issue a certificate. Insurance is usually required by the establishment where you hold your events.



Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Buckeye Vavoom

Exhibited by: Debbie McInnis

Hybridized by: P. Hancock

Large

Coming Events

Check the AVSA Events page (www.africanviolet-societyofamerica.org/events), search the local club on Facebook or contact the organizers listed below for the latest information on these events.

■ February 25-26, 2022 — Florida

Tampa African Violet Society
Show and Sale
Temple Terrace United Methodist Church
5030 E. Busch Blvd.
Temple Terrace, FL
Friday: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Saturday: 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Mary Lou Harden: MLhard@verizon.net
Jean Krauchik: Jtkra2@yahoo.com
www.tampaafricanviolets.com

■ February 26, 2022 — Colorado

Rocky Mountain Streptocarpus Society
in conjunction with the Rocky Mountain
African Violet Council
Show and Sale
Tagawa Gardens
7711 S. Parker Rd.
Centennial, CO
Saturday: 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Trudy Brekel: violetlady7@msn.com

■ March 4, 2022 — Texas

Spring Branch African Violet Club
Annual Spring Show and Sale
Marriott Courtyard Hotel
12401 Katy Freeway
Houston, TX
Saturday: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Vickie Crider: vcriders52@outlook.com

■ March 25-26, 2022 — Florida

Heart of Jacksonville African Violet Society
Display and Sale
San Jose Church of Christ
6233 San Jose Blvd.
Jacksonville, FL
Friday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Bobbi Johannsen: bobbibiz@bellsouth.net
Emi Kimbrough: emikimbrough@gmail.com

■ April 8-9, 2022 — Minnesota

African Violet Society of Minnesota
69th Annual AVSA Affiliate Show
Northtown Mall
398 Northtown Drive
Blaine, MN
Friday: 10 a.m.-7 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Jude Neumann: judeneumann@frontiernet.net

■ April 9-10, 2022 — Virginia

Richmond African Violet Society
Show and Sale
Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden
1800 Lakeside Ave.
Richmond, VA
Saturday: 1-5 p.m.
Sunday: 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Sharon Long: Slong15781@aol.com

■ April 23, 2022 — Ontario

Lakeshore African Violet Society of Toronto
Show and Sale
St. Philip's Lutheran Church
61 W. Deane Park Drive
Etobicoke, Ontario
Saturday: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Beverley Williams:
beverleyandbrucewilliams@rogers.com
Doris Brownlie: jbrownlie@idirect.com
www.lakeshoreavs.com

■ April 23-24, 2022 — Louisiana

Louisiana Lagniappe AVS (formerly Sundowners AVS)
Show and Sale
Baton Rouge Garden Center
7950 Independence Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA
Saturday: 1-5 p.m.
Sunday: 11 a.m.-3 p.m.
George Ramirez: gramirez1040@gmail.com



Photo credit: Richard Craft

Mary Craig

Lone Star AVS Convention & Show

Exhibited by: Wayne Geeslin

Hybridized by: R. Nadeau

Large



And the Winners Are ...

By Mary Corondan

Email: winners@avsa.org

■ Rocky Mountain AV Council, CO — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: Moon Child, Omaha Thunder, Hot Tamales; Best Standard: Hot Tamales; Best Semiminiature: Jolly Fire; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Bristol's Party Boy'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Trudy Brekel**.
- 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Too Tempting, Tahitian Sunset, Frozen in Time; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Beach Glass, Cupid's Jewel, Jolly Texan; Best Miniature: Rosy Cheeks, **Deb Carnevale**.
- 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Blue Silhouette, Rob's Slap Happy, Jolly Butterfly, **Penny Smith-Kerker**.
- Best Trailer: Fun Trail, **Susan Shaw**.
- Best Design, **Melissa Shopnitz**.
- Design Sweepstakes, **Julie Anderson**.

■ Lone Star AV Council, TX — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Nostalgia, Mary Craig, Cajun's Hot Expectations; Best Standard/Best in Show: Mary Craig, **Wayne Geeslin**.
- 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Cajun's Coujon, Hunter's Mother's Love, Jersey Blue Dreams; Best Semiminiature: Hunter's Sweet

Sakura; Best Trailer: Carolina Bodacious; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Mary Corondan**.

- Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Star, Ness' Crinkle Blue, Tiptop, **Vickie Crider**.
- Best Miniature: Hunter's Fawn Frolic, **Shelli McCauley**.
- Best Species: *S. 5b* clone *grotei* Silver, **Jo Schrimsher**.
- Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia* 'Ozark Rosy Cheeks', **Penny Smith-Kerker**.
- Best Design, **Nadine Tichy**.
- Design Sweepstakes, **Danny Tidwell**.

■ North Star AV Council, MN — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: Cajun's Freckleface Kid, Hunter's Sweet Emotion, Cajun's Flamboyant Mistress; Best Species: *S. clone grandifolus* #237, **Carol Semrau**.
- Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Dear, Ness' Crinkle Blue, Rob's Hand Puppet; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Hand Puppet; Best Trailer: RS-Zimnyi Tsvetok; Best Gesneriad: *Episcia* 'Kee Wee'; Best Design, **Barbara Werness**.
- Best in Show/Best Standard: Cajun's Freckleface Kid; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Gail Podany**.

African Violet Magazine Article and Column Deadlines

- January/February issue: November 1
- March/April issue: January 1
- May/June issue: March 1

- July/August issue: May 1
- September/October issue: July 1
- November/December issue: September 1

We would love to hear from you! Please send articles or article ideas for the *AVM* to Sophia Bennett at editor@avsa.org.



AVSA Affiliate Update

By Jeri Anderson

Email: affiliate@avsa.org

January New Year's resolution: Check to see if your club information on the AVSA website is current. If the information is still up to date, please send an email to affiliate@avsa.org letting us know your club information is still current. We will update your "update date" on the website. However, if your club information is not up to date, please take a few minutes to update the information.

To update your club information on the website, from the Home page, place your cursor on the Participate button. Select Find an Affiliate Club from the drop-down menu. Now, on the top portion of the Affiliate page, click on the Update Affiliate Club Information button. The Affiliate Update form will open for you to input your club's information.

Do you have too many violet plants? Is your club not going to have a sale anytime soon? I'd like to suggest that you donate some of your beautiful plants to an assisted living facility or thrift store that helps a worthy cause. You will cheer up someone's day or help a cause. The same idea goes for your excess copies of *African Violet Magazine*. Take some into an assisted living facility for people to enjoy.

Does your club use the *African Violet Magazine* as part of your meeting? My club has an AVSA representative who will point out one or two articles from the latest magazine. The goal is to have our members be aware of some of the information in the *AVM*. It's pretty easy to flip through the magazine and admire all of the pretty pictures without taking time to actually read the articles. If you don't read the magazine, you are missing out on a ton of information.

We have a list of members working to start a club:

- Joanne Daane: Ashland, OR;

Email: jorose12@yahoo.com

- Jennie Lawrence: Laramie, WY;

Email: missjennae@yahoo.com (Jennie also has a Facebook Group started called African Violets in the Wyoming Area)

There are several states
that do not have even
one African violet club.
If you live in one of
these states, please
consider starting a
local club.

Reach out to them if you are interested in joining a club in one of these areas.

There are several states that do not have even one African violet club. If you live in one of these states, please consider starting a local club. The AVSA website now has all of the information you need to start a new club. From the Home page, click on the Participate button and select the Find an Affiliate Club option. You will now see the Guide to Starting a Club box at the top of the screen.



Shows and Judges

By Mary Corondan

Email: judges@avsa.org

There is so much excitement now that shows are occurring again. There were four shows this past fall and this spring looks even more promising. It is such a wonderful thing to be exchanging plants and leaves with violet friends again.

As shows begin happening, a question was received regarding the AVSA Standard Show Award (SSA) Point Score Sheet and, more specifically, the number of exhibits and percentage of members exhibiting. The sheet reads as follows.

MAXIMUM/EARNED

1. EXHIBITS AND EXHIBITORS

a. Number of exhibits in horticulture and design divisions 6.00

1. Award 6 points if number of exhibits is 4 times club membership:

2. Award 6 points if number of exhibits is 4 times council, state, or regional membership registered (or in attendance):

b. Percentage of members exhibiting 4.00

1. Award 4 points if 50% of club members exhibit:

2. Award 4 points if 25% of registered members attending council, state, or regional groups with over 100 members exhibit:

(If necessary, prorate points on both a. and b.)

The key phrase to calculating this section is found in the last sentence, which states "If necessary, prorate points on both a. and b." A local club with 20 members should have at least 80 exhibits in a show to receive the maximum of six points. If only half the needed exhibits are in the show (40), the maximum of six points would be cut in half and the total points awarded would be three.

The same phrase refers to the percentage of members exhibiting. Should a local club with 20 members have five members exhibiting rather than 10 (50%), the number of points would be cut in half from four to two points.

Page 54 of this issue contains information about the AVSA 2022 Convention Judging School. It will be a wonderful, informative school taught by Barbara Werness. I hope to see you there!

In Memory

Carol Van

Carol Van passed away on November 19, 2021, at her son's home in Chesterfield, Virginia. She was 76. She grew up in many different areas while her dad was active in the U.S. Army. She continued with military life when she married Dick Van, who served in the U.S. Air Force. Together they raised three sons and were graced with five grandchildren and one great-grandchild.



Growing African violets was a beloved hobby for most of Carol's adult life. She was a member of the now-disbanded Old Dominion AVS in northern Virginia. She later joined Tidewater AVS in Norfolk, Virginia, and was a charter member of the Mid-Atlantic AVS. In 2010, she received the national AVSA Hudson Memorial Award in recognition of her outstanding service and leadership in her local affiliate. Carol will be remembered for bringing

steering-wheel-sized standard plants to show, her skill as an African violet and gesneriad judge, her willingness to help out wherever needed and her fun sense of humor. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her. —*Sue Hoffmann*

Jim Owens

James (Jim) E. Owens of Springfield, Ohio, passed away on November 21, 2021. He was 88. He was born in Grandview, Indiana, and served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War. After returning home, he earned a bachelor's degree from Indiana University and went on to work as an information systems supervisor.

Jim was a member of the Columbus AVS and also served as the Tour Director of the AVSA National Convention. He started as the Assistant Tour Director in 1992 but moved up to Director in 1995 because of the lively times he promoted on the bus rides. Members would always return to the convention saying, 'You should have been on the bus.' The tours during this period were always full.

Jim created the first working website for AVSA and was the Webmaster for over fifteen years. If there was a problem, he was available to fix it or provide assistance. Members always wanted more pictures of African violets, so he spent hours providing them. He also volunteered to help with the Ways & Means Committee. He was a fantastic person that could get everyone into a lively spirit. —*Ron Davidson*

Mary Ann Ryan

Mary Ann Ryan of Wolcott, New York, passed away on October 18, 2021. She was 86. Mary Ann was active in the New York State AVS as a Director and photographer. She was an AVSA Judge who exhibited in many local shows and earned numerous awards for her beautiful plants.

Surviving Imelda

By Glenda Williams

Email: secondvp@avsa.org

September 14, 2019, began as any other weekend — a time for hanging out with our families, barbecues, playing with our plants, shopping and just relaxing around the house. Unbeknown to us, a storm was brewing off the coast of Florida. In just a matter of days, the soul of AVSA would forever be changed. I want to share this important story so you may understand the impact of what really happened in September 2019 and its continued influence on the organization.

Anatomy of a Storm

September 14 to 16: The National Hurricane Center monitored an area of disturbance that formed off the west coast of Florida and moved across the Gulf of Mexico, soon reaching the southeast Texas and southwest Louisiana coastlines.

September 17, noon CDT: Tropical Depression Eleven organized just off the Texas coastline with maximum sustained winds of 40 mph and gusts up to 48 mph.

12:45 p.m.: Tropical Depression Eleven strengthened and was named Tropical Storm Imelda.

1:45 p.m.: Tropical Storm Imelda made landfall near Freeport, Texas, with maximum sustained winds of 40 mph.

September 17, 7:00 p.m. to September 19: Imelda was downgraded to a tropical depression. However, remnants stalled between Houston and Lufkin, Texas. Multiple significant rainfall feeder bands developed, resulting in severe flooding in many areas, including southwestern Louisiana and Jefferson County in southeastern Texas, the location of the AVSA National Office. The storm finally moved out of the area the afternoon of September 19 but did not dissipate until September 21.

We will forever be
grateful to the many
generous donors who
came through for
AVSA during this
difficult time.
Thank you.

Disaster impact: Damage estimates for Imelda exceeded \$5 billion. Jefferson County, Texas, was the most heavily impacted by Imelda. Estimates are that more than 5,100 homes and businesses were flooded or damaged, with \$14 million in estimated damages for this county alone.

Beaumont, Texas: Ground Zero

AVSA's rented national office on IH-10 was severely damaged by Imelda. The Executive Committee at the time (Sue Ramser, Susan Anderson, Mary Corondan, Terri Post, myself, and the late Richard Nicholas, who passed away unexpectedly in November 2019 and was replaced by Winston Goretsky) immediately took action to begin the arduous disaster recovery process.

Amy Carruth, AVSA Office Manager, who lives in Beaumont, was AVSA's most critical asset before, during and after the event. Her extensive knowledge of business operations, as well as her loyalty and commitment to AVSA, proved invaluable during the recovery process.

I was able to call upon skills acquired during my 40+ years as an information technology and business continuity/disaster recovery (FEMA-certified) professional. I volunteered to assume responsibility for the short-term (immediate) disaster recovery efforts in Beaumont. Amy and I became the ground zero team.

Amy and I had multiple phone conversations before, during and immediately after the storm. We felt helpless and fearful of what we would find. During the storm, we spent time encouraging each other with positive thoughts with the hope that it would prepare us for the work ahead.

The Ground Zero Game

Amy entered the AVSA office on September 20. The office was located in ground zero for the storm and subjected to 43+ inches of rainfall, the majority having fallen between September 18 and 19. Our building had over 12 inches of Category 3 toxic flood waters on the outside perimeter from a nearby drainage bayou, with 8 inches inside the first floor, including our entire leased AVSA office space.

Amy was resourceful. She found people to help with debris removal. Personal protective equipment was in short supply. Amy was only able to score a handful of N95 masks, a box of trash bags, a few rolls of paper towels and a box of disposable gloves.



Water-damaged debris were removed to the curb for disposal.

By September 22, the flooding subsided enough for me to drive to Beaumont. There are no words that could ever come close to describing the devastation. Electricity was out all over Beaumont. The city was

dark and dangerous, even during the day. Supplies were limited or nonexistent. Mosquitoes were out of control. There were intermittent rain showers that continued on for days.



Damage to the main hallway of the AVSA National Office.

To this day, Amy and I still smell the indescribably horrendous stench from the building. The structure was old, so all of the insulation, pipes and wiring were already dirty. Now, the structure was wet. Due to the stench and the extensive damage to the entire lower floor, recovery was slow, and time spent inside was limited. The weather was hot and humid, so mold began to flourish. There was no fresh air anywhere, just the smell.

Disaster zones are chaotic. People are hurting, tired, frustrated and angry. Disasters bring out the worst and the best of humanity. The experience certainly left us

feeling helpless and out of control.

That evening, we moved the majority of AVSA's mission-critical business assets (computers, IT equipment, business records and archives) to Amy's

house. There was severe damage to the computers, including the main server containing iMIS, AVSA's membership management system. Work began immediately to determine how or if the system could be recovered.

Over the next few days, we packed anything salvageable into plastic bins and took the bins to Amy's house. Over many hours and many tears, we gently separated moisture-damaged AVSA artifacts so they could dry. Many years of AVSA history lay before us as we did our best to recover as many artifacts as we could.

We got lucky finding a prospective office location. A six-month lease allowed us to catch our breath before making any long-term decisions about our future. We moved to the new location on September 26.



The new AVSA National Office on College Street in Beaumont, Texas.

Transition to Long-Term Disaster Recovery

When I returned home after that first week on the ground, much of my work involved collaborating with the AVSA Technology Committee on IT recovery efforts. We had a system backup, but unfortunately, the server hardware, operating system software and iMIS software were over a decade old and out of date. There were no vendors even remotely interested in helping recover our old system or data.

The system contained approximately 71,000 membership records dating back to the mid-1990s. When the server's hard drive crashed, the entire membership master database was lost. We were faced with

the difficult realization that our membership database had to be rebuilt from scratch.

After searching the office computers, we found an Excel file of membership records extracted from the old iMIS system in August that was sent to the printer to use for mailing the *African Violet Magazine*. The file contained very basic demographic information of about 3,000 active members. Although only a small snippet of information, this Excel file became a starting point for rebuilding our data. We jokingly called it the "mother of all databases," and the legacy of "Mother" began.

Mother grew over the next year to become the master membership data file. Unfortunately, Mother was an Excel file and not a database. Amy's workload increased because she had to double enter transactions. Amy continued to evolve Mother until a replacement solution for the old iMIS system was procured.

In January 2020, the EC identified the recovery of the membership management system as a formal IT project and transitioned project management to Winston Goretsky. His extensive IT skills, combined with Amy's business acuity, became the backbone of the iMIS Cloud project. By summer and with several timely monetary donations, we procured a new cloud-based iMIS system and successfully uploaded Mother's records. As for Mother, Amy still uses her today for historical purposes.

In parallel with the iMIS system upgrade, the Technology Committee upgraded the AVSA website, and both project implementations were successfully rolled out in January 2021. The successful collaboration between AVSA's technology-related committees and volunteers resulted in the rebirth of multiple technologies into our new membership management system and the new public face of AVSA.

Onward to the Future

They say everything happens for a reason, and that difficult life lessons allow us to learn and grow. If there is a bright side to this disaster, it's that AVSA successfully downsized and retooled many of its old business operations to be leaner and more

efficient. The new office is refreshing and the rent is cheaper. We have a wonderful landlord, and we are located in an area that is not prone to flooding. Even though the first year following the event was an uphill financial struggle, Terri Post was a miracle worker. She used her financial savvy, combined with the generosity of many donors, to get AVSA back on the more solid financial ground where we are today.

AVSA has learned to be better prepared and plan for the unexpected. We are now more focused on the

important aspects of keeping a nonprofit healthy. We will forever be grateful to the many generous donors who came through for AVSA during this difficult time. Thank you. We have grown up and a bright future is before us. Sometimes clouds do have silver linings.

Editor's note: Details about Tropical Storm Imelda were sourced from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and National Weather Service.

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African Violet Magazine Through the Years

The more things change, the more they stay the same. As we embark on another year of publishing *African Violet Magazine*, we take a look at how the

covers and content of the magazine have evolved (or not) over time.



June 1957:

“An Option on Lights” by Dr. S.C. Reed

“Decorate Your Cakes with African Violets” by Helen Thompson

“Gibberellins and Their Effect on the African Violet” by Evan Paul Roberts



March 1960:

“A Hint for Folks Afraid of Using Mite Poisons” by Anna Steele

“African Violets Are Like People” by Mabel and John Gutridge

“African Violets at Rio Bueno, Jamaica, West Indies” by Sadie Veira



December 1964:

“Mutations Produced by Beta and Gamma Radiation” by Giles Brown

“The Story of Strawberry Foliage” by Henry Peterson

“Example of Faith: 95-Year-Old Buys Life Membership” by Charles Day





January 1970:

- "At War with the African Violet" by Jane L. Hilkebrandt
- "Bugs! Bugs! Who Got the Bugs?" by Mrs. and Mr. Michael J. Shirock
- "Vacation Care" by Mrs. Russell Yawger
- "Calling All Men (Men's Club)" by H.O. (Bud) Feddersen



July 1986:

- "AVSA Building Fund Is on Its Way!" by Janet Riemer
- "Springtails" by Dr. Charles L. Cole
- "New Council Forms in Midwest: Missouri Valley AVS" by Joyce Stork



November/December 1996:

- "In Search of New Violets: Do Violets Have Any Lethal Genes?" by Dr. Jeff Smith
- "Interpretive Flower Arrangements" by Edna Rourke
- "Growing African Violets in Rock Wool" by Eugene Allerton



November • December 2016:

- "Buckeye Nostalgia ... The Show Plant That Almost Wasn't" by Pat Hancock
- "If I Could Only Have One African Violet" by Bruce Pearson
- "Fertilizer Enhancements: What Works and How" by Neil Lipson

It's Time to Apply for the AVSA College Scholarship

By Dr. Charles Ramser

Email: scholarship@avsa.org

For over 20 years, AVSA has offered a college scholarship program for undergraduate and graduate students studying ornamental horticulture, floriculture, plant genetics, botany or an equivalent program in an accredited college or university. The organization is now accepting applications for the 2022-23 school year.

The AVSA College Scholarship is funded through the Boyce Edens Research Fund. Depending upon fund availability at award time, one or possibly two students are selected annually. The award is generally offered for one academic year — two semesters — at a time. Awardees may apply in successive years but will be in competition with new applicants. Prior to application, students normally must have completed

a minimum of 24 semester or quarter hour college credits while maintaining at least a B average. Awards are based upon merit.

The application form is available at www.africanvioletocietyofamerica.org under the Learn drop down menu. Look for the option that says Scholarships/Grants. The completed form, an official transcript and two professor recommendations should be submitted to the Scholarship Selection Committee by March 1, 2022.

Send application materials to:

Dr. Charles Ramser
2413 Martin St.
Wichita Falls, TX 76308

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Violet Preservation Committee Update and Most Wanted List

By Mary Thompson

Email: preservingviolets@avsa.org

You may have noticed in the May/June and September/October 2021 issues of *AVM* that the Most Wanted article, originally written by the late Barbara Elkin, has been resurrected. The Most Wanted program matches people who are looking for a vintage violet (one that is 25 years old or older) with someone who has the violet.

There have been a few changes. You can now list a violet that is 10 years old or older, not just a vintage one. Thanks to the website committee, specifically Candace Baldwin and Joyce Stork, you can now find the Most Wanted list on the AVSA website. Go to www.africanvioletocietyofamerica.org and click on Participate, then Most Wanted Violets. There is one form to request a violet and one to share a violet.

In the past couple of months, we have made several matches. I urge you to look at the list below or go to the website and see if you have any of these to share. We want to keep these violets in circulation for people to enjoy for years to come.

Ask Neva
Bryte Pixie
Chanticleer
Commodore
Fantasy Florale
Happy Harold
His Promise
Irresistible
Kira

Midget Bon Bon
Mosaïque
Old Dominion Sparkler
Plum Tip
Rhapsodie Elfriede
Sailor Boy
Suncoast Calypso
Teeny Weeny
Viking



Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Chanticleer

Grown by: Donna Brining
Hybridized by: Eyerdorn
Standard

Booster Donations

By Randy G. Deutsch, Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Donations received from September 1, 2021, through October 31, 2021 Total: \$1,547

Email: fundraising@avsa.org

Booster Donations support AVSA ongoing general expenses.

■ \$1,000-\$1,099

Terry Jordan, Virginia Beach, VA

■ \$100-\$199

Jeri Anderson, Tucson, AZ

Bill Farrand, Ann Arbor, MI

■ \$50-\$99

Black Oak Violets, Paradise, PA

Carolyn Lantz, Timberville, VA

Kathleen Zaylskie, Fargo, ND

Kingsland Garden Club, Texas

In lieu of speaker's fee for Glenda Williams

■ \$25-\$49

Sandra Skalski, Mullica Hill, NJ

Jill Stern, Deer Park, NY

Quad Cities AVS, Iowa

■ Under \$25

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Mary Moreno, Albuquerque, NM

Robin Murray, Aptos, CA

Gail Podany, Minnetonka, MN

Jim Schrader, Yorba Linda, CA

Wilma Wolverton, Grain Valley, MO

Barbara Burde Endowment Fund

By Randy G. Deutsch, Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Donations received from September 1, 2021, through October 31, 2021 Total: \$65

Email: fundraising@avsa.org

The Barbara Burde Endowment Fund supports the Society's long-term needs in technology.

■ \$50-\$99

Black Oak Violets, Paradise, PA

■ Under \$25

Gail Podany, Minnetonka, MN

Anne and Frank Tinari Endowment Fund

By Janet Riemer Pennington, New Jersey

Donations received from September 1, 2021, through October 31, 2021 Total: \$280

The Anne and Frank Tinari Endowment Fund supports the long-term stability of the Society.

■ **\$50-\$99**

Rita Kuni
Vivian Bickley
Black Oak Violets

■ **\$25-\$49**

African Violet Club of Morris County, New Jersey
In lieu of speaker's fees for Dale Martens
First African Violet Society of Wichita Falls, Texas
In memory of Winston Goretsky's mum

■ **Under \$25**

Elizabeth J. Kelly
Gail Podany
Virginia Scarbrough
Lois Patton

Boyce Edens Research Fund

By Randy G. Deutsch Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Donations received from September 1, 2021, through October 31, 2021 Total: \$72

Email: fundraising@avsa.org

The Boyce Edens Research Fund supports research and scholarships.

■ **\$25-\$49**

Lainey Grace, Pinckneyville, IL

■ **Under \$25**

Gail Podany, Minnetonka, MN
Sandra Sanders, Lebanon, OH



In Search of New Violets

By Dr. Jeff Smith

Email: jsmith4@bsu.edu

The last “In Search of New Violets” column had questions relating to chimeras. Since that issue was released, several additional questions have come in regarding chimeras. This column will do a quick review of what causes a chimera then address the new questions.

Chimeras are organisms that contain several different and distinct genetic cell lines within the organism. Plants grow from meristems, or areas of cell division at the tip of the stem and also at the tip of the root. The cells of the meristem are in distinct layers that produce specific tissues within the plant. For example, there is a layer that produces only the epidermis (skin layer) of the stem and roots. An internal layer of dividing cells produces only the internal tissues, such as the vascular tissue and other surrounding cells. The layers are usually distinct. Plant structures such as the leaves and flowers are developed from combinations of the outer and inner layers of cells.

In a chimera, the DNA has become different between the outer and inner layer of cells. This may be due to a random mutation in one of the meristem cells that passes the mutation to all of its descendent cells. If one of the meristem cells of the epidermis has mutated, only the epidermal cells will inherit and exhibit the mutation. A parallel event can occur for the meristem that produces the inner cell layers. The mutation will only be expressed in cells that are descendants of the inner meristem.

A true chimera can only be reproduced from a bud or sucker that has both epidermis and inner cells organized in the correct layers. The layering of cells must be maintained for the chimera to be reproduced true to type. Leaf cuttings originate only from

the epidermal cells and lack the inner cell layer. Plantlets that develop from the epidermis layer only will not be a chimera and will not be true to type. This is one of the reasons why chimera plants are difficult to reproduce and more expensive. You must maintain both outer and inner cell layers in the new plant to maintain the chimera.

Before you declare your new leaf variegation a chimera, see if the pattern is consistent between the edges and center of the leaves and if the pattern can be reproduced true to type through suckers and buds.

The first two questions in this column relate to chimeras. If you keep in mind that the chimera must have two different cell layers to remain true to type, the explanations will make more sense.

Q: I used a chimera with fantasy in the outer stripe as the pollen parent in a cross. I thought that fantasy was a dominant trait. So far, none of the 50 or more seedlings from the cross are

showing any fantasy in their flowers. What happened to the fantasy trait?

A: A further conversation with this individual showed that their chimera pollen parent had fantasy in the outer stripe, but had a solid color in the center stripe (no fantasy marks). Flowers are made from both the epidermal and center tissues. The epidermal layer makes the outer stripes on the petals and the center tissue makes the inner stripe and the flower's reproductive organs. Although fantasy is a dominant trait, the pollen made from the cells of the center tissue lacked the fantasy trait. Therefore, the pollen parent would not pass on the fantasy trait. The center stripe and reproductive organs didn't have fantasy and none of the pollen would carry the trait.

The results of the cross support the chimera layering of the cell types. A cross using a fantasy pollen parent should have produced at least 50% fantasy offspring. No fantasy offspring are being produced in this cross. The pollen from the center stripe simply did not have the trait due to the chimera cell layers, and only solid coloration was passed on to the offspring.

If the center stripe in a chimera shows fantasy, then the fantasy trait should be passed on to some of the offspring. It is a bit unusual for a chimera plant with fantasy to not have the trait in both cell layers, but it clearly can happen, and it makes a big difference in the inheritance of the fantasy trait.

Q: I have a plant that has sported and is now showing leaf variegation. Is this a possible leaf chimera?

A: Perhaps. Is the variegation in a distinct pattern, and do most or all of the leaves show the pattern? True leaf chimeras usually have a pattern of one color on the edge of the leaf and a different color in the center of the leaf. This is due to the epidermis layers being used to produce the leaf edge and the inner tissue layer making up most of the leaf center. Rob's Lucky Duck and Harmony's Little Stinker are good examples of leaf chimeras that show a consistent pattern of color arrangement between the edges and center areas of the leaf. These plants can also only be reproduced true to type by suckers or buds, supporting the need for

the two cell layers to be maintained in a specific arrangement. This requirement is consistent with chimeras.

A very common mutation for variegation is spontaneous variegation. In this mutation, the changes in coloration are usually very random and varied between the leaves. The pattern of color is not consistently different between the edges and center areas of the leaf. Spontaneous variegation is very difficult to reproduce true to type even when using suckers and buds. It may be possible sometimes to reproduce from leaf cuttings, something that is usually impossible for a true chimera.

Before you declare your new leaf variegation a chimera, see if the pattern is consistent between the edges and center of the leaves and if the pattern can be reproduced true to type through suckers and buds. If your new variegation passes these requirements, it might be a true chimera. If not, I would suspect that the variegation is a spontaneous variegation.

Q: Are there any advantages when breeding for fantasy offspring to have both the seed parent and pollen parents showing the fantasy trait?

A: Fantasy is a genetic dominant trait and should be passed on to approximately 50% of the offspring if at least one parent has the fantasy trait. However, when both parents have fantasy, you can get some offspring that are homozygous dominant for the fantasy trait.

There are some advantages to the homozygous dominant condition. For the dot/dash fantasy, the pattern in the homozygous dominant plants will have many more dots of contrasting color. This can give a much more uniform pattern of fantasy marks across the entire flower. In the puff fantasy plants, the number of puff marks are increased in the flower and may also show up in the foliage. Plants that have red-backed foliage (another dominant trait) often show puff fantasy marks in the foliage, especially under the homozygous dominant condition. If both parents have fantasy, you will also increase the odds of getting fantasy offspring by 75% to nearly 100%.



What causes a flower inside of a flower? Photo by Dawn Early.

Q: Why is the flower in the picture showing another bud inside the flower?

A: Thanks to Dawn Early for sending in this picture of Bashful Baby. I have seen other pictures of the

“flower within a flower” phenomenon, but this is one of the clearest pictures of this unusual mutation.

There are genes in organisms called master genes that control the development of organs (Hox genes). Sometimes they sport and send out a signal to develop another entire organ. In this case, I would speculate that one of the stamens has been mutated to develop into a separate flower. Sometimes you only get a partial mutation of the master control genes, which results in an extra layer of stamens or petals. These have been helpful mutations in developing the double- and triple-layered flowers in African violets.

In the case shown in this picture, the master control gene mutation is more localized and has resulted in a new bud inside of an existing flower. The mutation is unlikely to be reproduced, but if the inner flower has functional stamens with pollen, you might try using the pollen to see if the trait can be captured and reproduced. I don’t know that flowers within flowers would be a useful new mutation, but you never know.



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Photo credit: Richard Craft

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Exhibited by: Anna Lammersen

Tips for Beginning Violet Hybridizers ... From a Beginner

By Bill Chaney

Email: billchaney@ymail.com

Hybridizing plants is a passion of mine. I have bred roses and irises for years and began breeding violets more recently. Hybridizing is a creative activity, more art than science. For some of us, it is in our blood and can become an obsession. If you love plants as I do, hybridizing is the most natural thing in the world. The mechanics of hybridizing are relatively simple and I encourage everyone who loves violets (or their plant relatives) to give it a try.

Here are some of the things I have learned about successfully working with these plants, in part from my past experience with plant breeding and in part from my own mistakes with violets.

Find Reliable Educational Resources

You will have a more enjoyable and successful experience by checking out any of the many resources on how to accomplish pollinating a flower and producing seedlings. There are a number of videos on the web, and there is an excellent article on hybridizing written by Jere Trigg available on the AVSA website. To find it, go to www.africanviolet.societyofamerica.org and click on Learn. Below the photo, click on Read Articles. Where it says Propagation, choose Hybridizing to find the article.



A group of seedlings grown by Jere Trigg from a cross of Jere's Pink Elephant x Rock Star. Photo by Jere Trigg.

Understand Your Goals and Preferences

Once you know how to make a cross between two varieties, stop to give some thought to what plants to use in your cross. This will be easier if you have already decided what type of plant and bloom you would like to produce. If your desire is to breed standard-size plants, use standard parents. Likewise, if you want miniatures to semiminiatures, use parents of this type. Once you have become more experienced, you may want to experiment with crosses using plants of different types to bring new leaf traits, flower colors or bloom types to your desired plant type.



Sam Cunningham produced a seedling with an unusual bloom form thanks to a cross with Wesley's Vampyre Concertina as the pollen parent. Photo by Sam Cunningham.

Not all bloom types look the same. If you are drawn to the unusual, you might consider working with the varieties of Jeff Jackson (Imp's), David Senk (Senk's) or Wesley Carter (Wesley's), who specialize in wasp and other non-traditional bloom forms. There are also many different leaf types. By combining different leaf types with different flower types, and different colors and plant sizes, the possibilities are endless.

Take a Crash Course in Genetics

It will be important to understand a few basic rules of genetics if you want to be sure your creations can be of a certain type or color. Basically, it is important to understand which traits are dominant over others and which traits are inherited only from the pod parent (for example, leaf variegation).

The previously-mentioned article by Jere Trigg has a table that addresses this. For example, if you make a cross of two blue flowers, it is likely (but not guaranteed) that you will get blue flowers on your seedlings, because blue is dominant over all other colors. If you breed with white flowers, you will get mostly white flowers because white is recessive to all other colors, as white flowers are not carrying other colors in their genetics. A little genetic information can go a long way.

Choose the Right Parents

I highly suggest choosing parents that are known to be fertile and easy to work with for your first attempt at hybridizing. It is a good idea to start with single or semi-double varieties, as they tend to be easier to pollinate and more cooperative. Although the parents of new hybrids are not made public by AVSA, many hybridizers are willing to share this information, and this can be a way to learn about good parents. It is also wise to choose varieties from hybridizers that produce plants that you admire, as they likely choose seedlings that have traits you like, which will hopefully pass to your seedlings.

Pick the Right Plants

Since your pod will take up to six months to mature, choose a plant that is not in need of repotting soon and is healthy as your pod parent. Consider pollinating several blooms on the same bloom stalk with the same pollen to increase your odds of

success. The flower of the pod parent should be only a few days old, whereas the bloom from which you collect pollen should be older.

**I highly suggest
choosing parents
that are known to be
fertile and easy to work
with for your first
attempt at hybridizing.**

Remember to label the bloom stalk in some way so you will not forget what the pollen parent is. It might be easy to remember such information at first, but if you make more than one cross, it is easy to forget or get seed pods mixed up. Small jewelry tags with string are convenient for marking seed pods and will help ensure pods do not get lost or accidentally groomed.

While it is possible to collect pollen by carefully cutting the pollen sacs open with a sharp blade, using a mechanical vibrating tool that is designed to cause the sac to shed pollen is much easier. The tool of choice is a VegiBee, which vibrates at a high speed and is very effective for collecting pollen from violets. It can be found at a number of online retailers or in some good garden shops.

Pay Attention to Humidity

Humidity is important in getting violets to set seed. Humidity that is too low will lead to poor pollination because the pollen grains will not open on the stigmatic surface and the stem will dry too quickly. Those little pollen grains must open and send a pollen tube down through the stigma to reach the ovary. If the humidity is too high, the pollen may lose viability or the developing pod may rot before maturing.

A good rule of thumb is that if the plants are growing well, the humidity is probably fine for hybridizing. If

you find you are not successful in getting seed pods to form, try increasing the humidity and perhaps using pollen that is from a little fresher bloom.

You should also look carefully at the stigma tip to see if the surface looks shiny in order to choose the best blooms to pollinate. The shiny appearance indicates that it is receptive to pollen and in the right stage for causing the pollen to form the necessary pollen tubes.

Don't Let Yourself Get Overwhelmed

Even a small seed pod can contain a huge number of tiny seeds. Planting all of these seeds can produce an overwhelming number of seedlings to manage. At first, consider planting only a portion of the seeds and storing the rest for later, when you are more comfortable handling the seedlings and have a feel for the time and space these babies will require. Seeds can be stored for long periods folded into a small piece of paper in an airtight container with a small packet of desiccant in the refrigerator.

Getting From Seed to Flowering

Sometimes the hardest part of hybridizing is getting from seeds to flowering plants. Producing seed is usually easy if the chosen parents are fertile (not all varieties are). Germination is also pretty easy to achieve, but tiny seedlings are very susceptible to under- or overwatering. Be sure the seeds are on top of your seedling mix, as they need good light for germination. Add water sparingly as a mist, as tiny seedlings can be prone to root rot. Once you have the hang of it, it is easy.

You might consider purchasing violet seeds from a reliable commercial source to practice the process of growing flowering plants from seeds. Be careful: The internet has lots of vendors offering "African violet" seeds that are not violet seeds at all. Nadeau African Violet Seeds is a reliable source and has great growing instructions.

Making the Right Selection

Once you have seedlings that begin to bloom, selecting the right seedlings to continue growing can be a challenge. One mistake that many new hybridizers make is to only look at the flower. While a beautiful flower is the goal for all of us, a good violet must also have good foliage and growth

habits. If you want to breed show plants, the plant's habits, especially natural symmetrical growth, become even more important.



This Moon Craze, grown by Willy Martinez, is an example of excellent foliage and growth habits. Photo by Willy Martinez.

Another trait that is important is whether the flowers are "droppers" or "sticktite." This trait refers to the tendency of flowers to drop from the bloom stalk before they die (droppers) or not (sticktite). Although a few popular varieties are droppers, most hybridizers will discard all seedlings that have this trait.



This seedling is from a cross by Sam Cunningham of Wesley's Pink Bubble Gum Cloud x Black Tie Affair. His photo shows an excellent bud count. Photo by Sam Cunningham.

It is also important that the bloom stalks hold their flowers upright and carry them above the foliage. The number of buds per bloom stalk is an important factor in selecting seedlings, as a good bud count is necessary to produce plants with lots of flowers over a long time.

Consider Specializing

I would encourage you to consider specializing in a particular type of violet rather than making crosses in all types, at least at first. Many great hybridizers have been known for a particular type of violet. For example, Hortense Pittman bred all

types of violets but may be best known for her Jolly series of semiminiatures and miniatures. Perhaps one of the most popular varieties for showing right now is Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler, bred by Pat Hancock, who is known for her beautiful large show plants. This variety is also in the pedigree of many large violets today.

The most important advice I can offer is to give hybridizing a try. It is exciting, rewarding and you can produce something that you, and perhaps violets lovers all over the world, will enjoy growing for many years.

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Planning Ahead for Plant Care

By Adrienne “Annie” Rieck

Email: annie97v@gmail.com

In September 2021, I learned I would need major abdominal surgery. It came with a six-week recovery period where I would not be able to lift more than 10 pounds, had to avoid stairs and could not bend over. I live alone, and as I was planning and arranging things in my home to accommodate my recovery period, I realized I was going to need to figure out how to care for my plants.

A friend suggested I use a technique the late Pauline Bartholomew details in her book “Growing to Show.” She recommends putting plants “in storage” by stripping them down to a few crown leaves and bagging them. I had enough time to do this, but I decided to go in a different direction.

My collection numbers 38 varieties of African violets and four other gesneriads. At different times of the year, I put my plants on reservoirs. That’s what I decided to do, but first, I needed to do some prep work. This was my process should anyone want to use it for themselves.

Look at Your Plants

About a month before my surgery, I took a good look at my plants and did as much grooming, disbudding, repotting and potting up of babies as possible. The young babies went into a covered tray for about a week before I introduced them to air. Once they were strong enough, I removed the dome and they remained in this community-watered tray for the duration.

The plantlets that were too small to separate or leaves that hadn’t sprouted yet went into a smaller covered dome where they would not need much care.



Look at Your Space

Next, I looked at my available space. I have four plant stands: two 2-foot by 2-foot four-shelf compact carts, one 2-foot by 2-foot three-shelf compact cart, and one 2-foot by 4-foot three-shelf Flora cart that was in my basement and had four plants on one shelf.



Two plant stands in Rieck’s sunroom.

I shut down the basement Flora cart and brought those four plants upstairs. Next, I took another look at my plants, this time with an eye toward divesting a few. I easily identified four plants that were not thriving in my growing conditions and let them go, making plenty of room on the three stands for the plants that came up from the basement. Then, I moved the two stands that had been in my guest room. One went out to join another in the sunroom. The other went into my office.



The plant stand in Rieck's office.

Know Your Limitations

I usually keep gallon jugs of plant water on the bottom shelves of my stands, but after surgery, I wouldn't be able to bend down to get water jugs. I weighed a full gallon jug of water and found it was over 8 pounds. That seemed too close to 10 pounds, so I gathered my rag-tag collection of gallon jugs, set them up on my kitchen bar and filled them only half-way. When it came time to top off reservoirs a couple of weeks into my recovery, all the water was at counter height and easily poured into my old-school green watering can.



Line Up Your Tools

Reservoirs were an important tool for me. Ones made from deli containers work well for 4-inch and smaller pots. Old Volkmann Brothers white saucers work for 5-inch pots. Regular plant saucers in multiple sizes work well for plants that don't fit comfortably on either of the standard reservoirs.



In addition, what my late mom called "the grabber" was very helpful during my recovery. In my plant room, I picked up the power strips to adjust my timers for Standard Time. It also came in very handy to pick up spent blossoms from my *Columnnea* 'Firebird'.

These four steps were key to enjoying my plants throughout recovery. Here are a few from my collection that came into bloom during my six-week recovery period.

Adrienne “Annie” Rieck is the host of the “All About African Violets” video podcast. She has been an indoor gardener most of her life and has been growing African violets for show for more than 20 years. She is a Lifetime member of AVSA and is an AVSA Senior Judge. She is an endometrial cancer survivor since October 29, 2021. www.allaboutafricanviolets.com



Removing spent blossoms from a *Columnnea* ‘Firebird’.



Top, L-R: Wisteria, Rhapsodie Annie, *S. clone orbicularis*
Bottom, L-R: Sport of Geyser of Color, *S. clone rupicolus*, Paula’s Fidgety Frankie



Photo credit: Richard Craft

Hunter's Fawn Frolic

Lone Star AV Council Convention & Show

Exhibited by: Shelli McCauley

Hybridized by: K. Muzalewski

Miniature



Photo credit: Richard Craft

Honey Blue Ace

Lone Star AV Council Convention & Show

Exhibited by: Mary Corondan

Hybridized by: H. Pittman

Miniature

Why Did My Leaf Die?

By Joyce Stork

Email: joycestork@avsa.org

Propagating African violet leaf cuttings can have its challenges. New growers especially may be frustrated when a leaf just dies without ever producing new plants. It is likely that one of the following caused the problem.

The Leaf Was Old

One of the most common errors is selecting leaves for propagation that are well past their prime. Old leaves are often softer and may be less green than young, vigorous leaves. Old leaves don't tolerate the stress of propagation well. When an older leaf does survive, it may require extra months of waiting for a baby plant.

Choose leaves for propagation from the third or fourth row from the center of the crown. These leaves will be sturdy, have rich color and will take less time to produce offspring.



Use sturdy, dark green leaves from near the center of the crown rather than lighter, older leaves for propagation.

Fungus Disease Was Present

When a violet plant is diseased, its leaves are likely to fail during propagation. Mentors sometimes suggest taking a couple of leaves from a sick violet to propagate (and trashing the plant to prevent further

spread). In that case, a grower would want to select only the healthiest-looking leaves. It would be additionally wise to do one of the following to remove spores and bacteria:

- Wash the leaves in tepid water with a drop of dish-washing liquid, then rinse
- Dip leaves in Physan 20 (1/2 teaspoon per quart of tepid water)

Do not use chlorine bleach solutions to prepare leaf cuttings. Bleach is often phytotoxic to cut cells.

Simple dips or washing will not remove disease inside the cells. For example, powdery mildew, which appears to be on the surface of the leaf, has often penetrated into the plant tissue and may cause future problems for propagated leaves.

Keep knives and surfaces clean as you work. Isolate any leaves propagated from a sick violet in a plastic bag or enclosure to prevent new outbreaks from spreading.

The Leaf Was Injured

Violet leaves are delicate. Handle them carefully. Avoid dropping or pinching leaves. When taking a leaf for propagation, try not to bend or twist it. Bruised cells will collapse over time. Growers may trim away these damaged areas on leaves. A sprinkle of cinnamon or turmeric along the cut is often effective at preventing further infection and

keeping the leaf alive to make babies.

Leaves exposed to long-term extreme temperatures (outside of the safe range of 60 to 80 degrees F) may collapse. Violet leaf cuttings shipped from growers

are especially subject to heat or chill damage. Always open leaf shipment packages as quickly as possible to minimize the possible damage.



Make sure the water used for propagating leaves is room temperature and clear.

The Leaf Had Excessive Variegation

Variegated violet leaves require careful selection for good survival rates. A high percentage of green is necessary for a variegated leaf to make roots and produce offspring. It is a common error to think that the greener leaves will produce babies that don't have nice variegation as they grow. In fact, the resulting babies will all carry the genetic trait and variegate well.

Too-heavily variegated leaves often will not survive propagation to make babies. They are also more likely to produce babies lacking chloroplasts (and lacking any green color), which means the babies will have no ability to make chlorophyll for energy. This is a dangerous condition and is often fatal.

The Leaf Received Poor Care

A propagated healthy leaf still needs diligent care. This includes maintaining an adequate supply of water. If propagating in water, be sure the water is at room temperature and is not cloudy with bacteria. A wilted propagated leaf often will not recover.

A sprinkle of cinnamon or turmeric along the cut is often effective at preventing further infection and keeping the leaf alive to make babies.

The temperature for a rooting leaf is also important. Aim for a steady 75 degrees F if possible. Direct sun can be too hot. If the leaf is rooted in potting mix and grown inside an enclosure like a plastic bag, expect the temperature to run about 5 degrees warmer than the air in the room. Temperatures below 70 degrees will produce slower results. Below 65 degrees, there will be almost no cell division.

Finally, humidity is a key factor. Very dry air may cause the parent leaf to wilt, roots to collapse and babies to die off. Growers in moderate to dry climates will usually need a dome or enclosure to maintain humidity around rooting leaves. Excessively humid air (especially with condensation) may make leaves or young plants vulnerable to damping off.

Try Again!

Patience is crucial in propagating leaves. Leaves sometimes die and things sometimes go wrong. If one leaf dies, try again. When you succeed, the results will make it worth the effort.

Getting to Know Svetlana Repkina, Hybridizer from Ukraine

Svetlana Repkina of Lugansk, Ukraine, has been hybridizing African violets for about 20 years and *Streptocarpus* for about seven years. Varieties such as 'RS-Mysterious Wanderer', 'RS-Passion' and 'RS-Pink Paradise' continue to be dearly loved, and she had more than 40 new introductions at the 2021 AVSA Cyber Diamond Convention, some of which are sure to become favorites. When we asked Repkina to tell us about herself and her work, she shared the information below.



Like many of us, as soon as the American varieties of violets hit our shelves, I was struck by the beauty and charm of this delicate flower and could not remain indifferent. So began my hybridizing work, the hunt for the disclosure of the flower potential.

Before 2014, when hybridizing work with violets was at its peak, I decided to try hybridizing new varieties of *Streptocarpus*. Many may not agree, but for me, *Streptocarpus* is a very delicate and unusual flower. I was inspired by the diverse colors of *Streptocarpus* and their abundant and unpretentious flowering. To my great surprise, I managed to achieve some interesting results. I worked with standard varieties, and then I wanted to diversify the color of miniature and

semiminature *Streptocarpus*. I really like my semiminature varieties such as 'RS-Boniface', 'RS-Storm', 'RS-Miami' and 'RS-Volcano'. Of the standard varieties, 'RS-Hot Sun', 'RS-Noon' and 'RS-Amphora' are especially cute.



RS-Tsvet-lantaria



RS-Saliut-Zhelanii

The last 10 years can be divided into two periods: the pre-war period of prosperity and creative growth, and the post-war period of recovery and new growth. The disaster in the east of Ukraine forced me to suspend my selection work. But for me, my work was still very important. Even in the most terrible moments, I could not throw away flowers. It was just insanely pathetic to leave all the work and energy that was invested in them.

At that time, there was absolutely no water. It was necessary to carry it in whole tanks from the outskirts of the city. It was worth it to save at least part of the collection.

When the telephone and Internet were restored, a wave of support from friends from the House of Violets poured in. I could not give up, even when I realized that only 20% of my entire collection remained. There was a difficult recovery period. It took several years for my own varieties to reappear in my collection and to return to my usual mode of hybridizing.

In addition to introducing new varieties, I communicate a lot with growers. I have repeatedly heard people say they wanted to try hybridizing when they got acquainted with my work. This is the highest degree of praise. My daughter decided to try hybridizing miniatures and standards. Now, she and her husband introduce varieties with the prefix BR.



RS-Feia-Vesny

My main plan for the coming years is to go back to hybridizing miniatures and trailers. There are certain parameters I really want to adopt from the standards. It is not possible to stop here; as soon as we come to the desired result, new roads immediately open up, which leads to even more interesting implementations.

In the future, I want to create more distinct varieties that will be remembered by even the most famous hybridizers and growers in the world. I think it's right to try to surpass yourself and strive for more outstanding results.



RS-Bezumnoia-Liubov



RS-Dozhdik



RS-Prelest



RS-Shershe-lia-Fam



Family Portrait: *Petrocosmea* 'Paul Kroll'

By Paul Kroll

Email: pfkroll@me.com

I risk being accused of narcissism with this column's subject. I am writing about one of the plants that has been named in my honor, *Petrocosmea* 'Paul Kroll'. My reason for choosing this plant is that so many of the plant friends with whom I communicate are constantly praising it and calling it a favorite of theirs. The No. 1 reason is that it is very floriferous.

P. 'Paul Kroll' was hybridized by Tim Tuttle. I met him several years ago when I was invited to teach a Gesneriad Society judging school in Tennessee. He was the Chairman of the school. We became good

friends and I am humbled that he chose to name one of his hybrids after me. He has done this for other friends as well, with *P.* 'Rosemary Platz' and *P.* 'Mary Bozoian'.

According to Tuttle, the plant is a cross of *Petrocosmea forrestii* × *P. minor*. It was the most floriferous and best-shaped seedling from a dozen that germinated. It was made in 2010 and selected and named in 2011. It was introduced at the Philadelphia Gesneriad Society's convention. The other selection from that cross is 'Keystone's Slippery Rock', which is a sibling plant available for purchase.



Photo credit: Beverley Williams

“Like the *P. forrestii* parent, it is an eager bloomer,” Tuttle said. “The minor parent is fragrant in the morning and I have detected slight fragrance from *P. ‘Paul Kroll’*.”

For several years, *Petrocosmea* was a very popular genus and grown by many in our hobby. There are several species and now several hybrids. In recent years, this genus has fallen from its high rank, as the Gesneriad Society has decided that when *Petrocosmea* plants are not in bloom, they do not earn a high score in the category of ornamental factors other than bloom. Although *Petrocosmea* plants grow with incredible symmetry to their foliage, they remain a green plant. A few of them have more significant foliage — shiny, textured, hairy, etc. — and can glean a mediocre score in the ornamental category. Most do not. There is, however, enough variation in the foliage of this genus that it is possible to make an

impressive collection entry (three to five plants) for that class in a Gesneriad Society show. This hybrid seems to bloom freely enough that it's worthy of growing for show.

Petrocosmea is probably the most shallow-rooted of all gesneriads. I grow mine in shallow pots, small condiment containers or tubs and usually put some perlite in the bottom, as the root ball is so shallow. They tend to sulk after repotting, as they do not like their roots disturbed. I always mold pot them, filling the next sized pot with a mold of soil with a hole the exact size as the old pot, and dropping the plant into that molded hole. This way, the root ball is undisturbed and the plant moves on in its growth. They prefer cooler conditions and otherwise grow well right next to my African violets and other gesneriads. If you have not tried growing *Petrocosmea*, you may wish to try this one.

“Perfectly Pittman” Video

This video chronicles the multiple hybrids, growing techniques, growing spaces and AVSA involvement of Hortense and Ray Pittman.



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The Motivation of Success

By Sylvia Leeds

Email: roseotx@gmail.com

Every time I earn a blue ribbon in an African violet show, I come home motivated to grow more beautiful plants to earn more blue ribbons in upcoming shows. The 2021 Lone Star AV Council show was no exception. I came home from Fort Worth, repotted and sprayed my plants, checked the pH, cleaned the stands and prepared for upcoming blue ribbons. How this will all turn out is yet to be seen, but at this point, I'm thinking positive.

Artist and author Bob Ross once said, "There's nothing in the world that breeds success like success." This premise, which is backed up by psychologists and medical professionals, can certainly be utilized in the growing and showing of African violets. The first growing and blooming of an African violet under my care was cause for serious celebration. The first blue ribbon I earned in a show was almost a life-changing experience.

We all know children thrive on success. They love showing off their artwork, earning gold stars at school and making 100s on their papers. Even though most of us must look back a long way to remember childhood successes, we still can be proud of ourselves for achieving it any way we can, including growing beautiful violets.

Many of us belong to violet clubs with dwindling numbers of members with dwindling amounts of interest in growing and showing. I have heard club officers say they have a lot of club members but few that grow and show. Obviously, none of us are getting any younger, and health problems, family issues and life in general often get in the way. However, those of us in club leadership positions can try to motivate members by providing opportunities for success.

Here are some suggestions for motivating club members to grow and perhaps show at least one African violet.

Those of us in club leadership positions can try to motivate members by providing opportunities for success.

Identify the Goal

The goal could be to grow a blue-ribbon African violet. You may want to start this at the beginning of the year and take it one step at a time at each monthly meeting.

Make it Easy and Hands On

Maybe your club could purchase a selection of unnamed violets. Have each member select one to grow. Have pots, soil and tools for each member to pot their violet at that first club meeting. Consider writing the steps on a board. Go down the steps one at a time. Example:

- Step 1: Remove the plant from the pot.
- Step 2: Brush off old soil.
- Step 3: Remove suckers.

Continue until each person has repotted their plant.

Suggest Teamwork

Have the experienced growers work with new members so they can learn and grow.

Praise! Praise! Praise!

Each month, ask for updates from each member. Suggest they bring a picture of their plant or even the plant itself so that other members can comment and offer suggestions. Point out what constitutes a blue-ribbon plant, such as quantity of bloom, no suckers and a single crown. Generally, there will be something praiseworthy about every plant that is discussed, so make sure each member receives some compliment every time. Don't be too critical or give too much information. All that will come later. You don't want to discourage anyone.

Help Members Show Off

At the end of the year, hold a mini show with the plants the members have grown. Recruit experienced members to judge. If your club participates in an AVSA-sanctioned show, encourage members to enter if you think they are ready.

Any participation by new members in the show should be regarded as a success. Even if they did not enter a plant or design, thank them for helping set up or break down or just coming to provide oversight.

Provide Meaningful Social Interaction

People join African violet clubs for many reasons. They may just need to belong to something or have somewhere to go and someone to talk to. Build on this. Provide social situations and encourage friendships among members. Be positive. There is no place in the African violet world for negativity. This may motivate members to become more active in growing and showing. They probably want to. They just need encouragement and to know you care.

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According to Swedish psychologist Dr. Anders Ericsson, motivation is the most significant predictor of success. Success itself is motivation for more success. Motivation builds determination to achieve something, like losing weight, securing a new job or growing beautiful African violets.

As we (hopefully) rise out of the COVID-19 pandemic and get back on track with meetings and shows, let's look for opportunities to grow our clubs and motivate both new and experienced growers. We could all use a little success!

Sylvia Leeds is LSAVC Secretary and President of Alpha AVS of Dallas.



Photo credit: Anatolii Ivanytski

Leo-Barvy-Lita

Cyber Diamond Convention

Hybridized by: A. Ivanytski
Standard



Photo credit: Richard Craft

Carolina Bodacious

Lone Star AV Council Convention & Show

Exhibited by: Mary Corondan

Hybridized by: L. Abplanalp

Semiminiature

Insect and Mite Pests in African Violets

The following descriptions have been adapted from the book “Insects and Mite Pests of African Violets” written by Dr. Charles Cole and copyrighted by AVSA. The complete book can be purchased from the AVSA Store or ordered from the office. The descriptions are intended to help with diagnosis. Once a pest is correctly identified, it will be easier to choose chemicals or cultural practices that might be recommended for controlling the pest in a specific location.

Sucking Pests

Sucking pests have elongate mouthparts that act much like a hypodermic needle. Their mouthparts pierce the tissue and the pests suck up the plant juices.

Thrips

Some of the most annoying sucking pests of African violets are thrips. Several species will feed on and reproduce on violets. Because of their small size, they can be very difficult to find on a plant and may go undetected for a long period of time. Pollen spill is often an indication of the presence of thrips. Control of some species can be difficult.

Soil Mealybugs

About 29 species of soil mealybugs are found in the U.S. At least two and perhaps four or more will feed on African violets. The species in this group are very difficult to distinguish from one another. Two species positively identified from African violets are the root mealybug (*Rhizoecus americanus*) and the Pritchard mealybug (*R. pritchard.*) Although the most commonly-occurring species appears to be the Pritchard mealybug, only an extensive survey can determine this.

Any practice that reduces plant stress and promotes good, vigorous growth will enhance pest control. Healthy plants are much less susceptible to pests than unhealthy plants.

Foliar Mealybugs

Foliar mealybugs are common pests of native trees, weeds and grasses. They readily attack many ornamental trees and shrubs as well as plants cultured for their flowers or foliage. These pests occur outdoors during warm weather and in the home and greenhouse throughout the year.

Aphids

Aphids, commonly called plant lice, are among the most common and numerous of all creatures on earth. More than 1,350 species are found in the U.S. and Canada. Nearly all plant species have one or more species of aphids that will attack them. More than six dozen species have been recorded from African violets. As a general rule, aphids do not like to feed on violets, but when forced to do so, due to

the lack of a more suitable host, they can cause serious damage.

Whiteflies

About 200 species of whiteflies have been described. Most of the species are tropical or subtropical. Only about 10 species are found on ornamental plants in the U.S. At least three species will readily attack African violets. Whiteflies can be quite annoying. They often occur in tremendous numbers and when heavily-infested plants are shaken, the air is filled instantly with a white cloud of these tiny pests.

Scale Insects

Scale insects are close relatives of mealybugs. More than 2,000 species have been collected from landscape, interiorscape and greenhouse ornamentals. About 20 are considered serious pests. Of these, two species are commonly found on African violets. These are the fern scale (*Pinnaspis aspidistrae*) and the brown soft scale (*Coccus hesperidum*).

Chewing Pests

Chewing pests have teeth-like mandibles. They damage plants by consuming the plant stems and leaves or even the buds and flowers. Their damage is quite evident as holes in the leaves or ragged edges on leaves. Often, flower buds may seem to disappear as they are totally consumed. Wounds often provide a place of entry for pathogens, resulting in secondary diseases invading the plant.

American Cockroach

The American cockroach is the most commonly-reported chewing pest of African violets in the United States. It is a pest in the greenhouse, the floral shop and the home. Just a few cockroaches on a floral cart or greenhouse bench can cause an unbelievable amount of damage.

Foliage Feeding Larvae

The larval or immature stage of several moths will damage violets. These larvae do not prefer violets as a host plant and feed on violets only when no other source of food is available. Many of these larvae cannot complete their development on violets.

Foliage Feeding Beetles

Several small beetles have been found feeding on African violets. Usually, they are trapped in the home or greenhouse. Beetles are quite active and move freely from plant to plant. Some feed on pollen but most feed only on the foliage.

Mites

More than 25 different species of mites have been recorded from African violets. Fortunately, most of these are not injurious to the plant. Mites collected from violets fall into four distinct groups. These are scavengers, fungus feeders, predacious mites and plant feeders.

Cyclamen Mites

The cyclamen mite is devastating to African violets. Its ability to increase numbers rapidly, its detrimental effects upon the plant and the difficulty in controlling this mite make it the most feared of all violet pests. It is about .001 inches long when full grown. It is almost impossible to detect without the aid of magnification. Damage occurs when mites insert their sucking-type mouth parts into tissue and remove sap but also inject a toxic chemical into the plant that disrupts growth.

Broad Mites

Broad mites are colorless when young but amber to dark green when mature. They are found almost exclusively on the underside of the leaves. As it feeds, it injects toxic chemicals into the plant, causing the leaf to become brittle and roll under or curl at the edges. As damage worsens, leaves may crack. Flowers may be distorted or discolored.

Privet Mites

Privet mites are sometimes called false spider mites. They are very small, flat, oval and dark red. They are found on the underside of leaves, particularly along leaf veins. Damage may appear as small brown flecks on the foliage, or the underside of the leaf may appear bronze while the upper surface shows a reddish discoloration.

Nuisance Pests

Many of the insects found in association with African violets cause little or no harm to the plants themselves but create a nuisance for plant growers.

Nuisance pests may be found on violet plants or in the root ball. Some are found on plant shelves or greenhouse benches. Others scurry about the home or greenhouse. Although nuisance pests are generally low in numbers, some can build up unbearable populations and have to be controlled. Often, nuisance pests need to be controlled as a matter of public relations prior to selling or giving a plant to another person.

Fungus Gnats

Fungus gnat is the common name given to a group of small flies. More than 600 species of fungus gnats are found in North America. Most species are of no importance to people or the plants we grow. A few species will invade our territory and become a nuisance pest. Only a few species will actually feed on and damage live plant tissue.

Springtails

Springtail is the common name of the insects belonging to the order Collembola. The order has more than 2,000 species with more than 300 found in North America. Springtails are extremely abundant, often numbering into the millions in a single greenhouse. Due to their small size and secretive habits, they are seldom seen except under very close observation.

Checking for Pests

Frequent examination is necessary in an effort to detect pests that have infested your plants. Weekly examinations are usually frequent enough to find pests before populations increase to damaging levels. In greenhouse operations, this may take a considerable effort. In a home where fewer plants are involved, plants are generally observed much

more frequently as they are given the TLC of normal grooming.

Pest Prevention

The African violet grower can often prevent or greatly reduce pest problems by adopting certain practices. One of the most important factors in maintaining a pest-free culture is to take care and introduce only pest-free plants into your culture. To achieve this, a grower must be knowledgeable in the detection of pests and pest damage.

Many violet pests are extremely difficult to detect when in low numbers. For this reason, newly-acquired plants may be isolated for a period of 60 to 90 days. While in isolation, frequent and thorough inspections should be made in an effort to determine if the plants are clean or infested with pests. Healthy plants are much less susceptible to pests than unhealthy plants.

Any practice that reduces plant stress and promotes good, vigorous growth will enhance pest control. One such factor is to maintain a clean greenhouse and growing area free of debris and old plant material. Other practices that enhance plant growth and reduce pest problems include maintaining proper temperature and keeping the growing media at the correct pH level.

The African violet is truly an amazing plant. Seldom has there ever been a plant that has responded so well to being cultured. With a little knowledge and a little effort, we can maintain the beauty and perfection of this jewel for our own pleasure and to share with those we care about.

A Primer on Mycorrhizal Fungi

By Sophia Bennett

Email: editor@avsa.org

In an article on potting mixes in the last issue of *African Violet Magazine*, several people shared that they add mycorrhizal fungi to their custom blends. This term is increasingly bandied about in gardening circles, but what are mycorrhizal fungi exactly and how do they help plants?

Mycorrhizal fungi are organisms that live in (endomycorrhizal fungi) or on (ectomycorrhizal fungi) a plant's roots and develop a symbiotic relationship with the plant. The fungi are not able to photosynthesize, so they pair up with plants that can supply them with carbohydrates. In exchange, the fungi make water and nutrients (including macronutrients like nitrogen, potassium and phosphorous and micronutrients such as iron, zinc and copper) available to the plant in a form that's easier for them to absorb.

It's thought that plants and mycorrhizal fungi can communicate, with the plant sending out signals about the nutrients it needs so the fungi can find and share them. The fungi form an extensive underground network with each other, so they are able to pull nutrients from a much larger area than a single plant could reach on its own.

Mycorrhizal fungi provide other benefits as well. Because their mycelium have a relatively large surface area compared to a plant's roots, they do a better job of retaining water. This is helpful for food crops, but it's also advantageous for house plants because when they are watered, the fungi in the soil absorbs more water and shares it with the plant when it needs it.

There is also some evidence that mycorrhizal fungi can help plants resist infection by other fungi and bacteria. According to the Cooperative Extension

Service at the University of Nevada-Reno, "This may be because the plant, being better nourished, is healthier and has better resistance to the invader. It may also be that the large physical presence of one fungus impedes infection by others. Another possibility is that either the plant or the fungus produces compounds that prevent infection by pathogens."

Researchers haven't yet proven that adding mycorrhizal fungi to potted African violets is beneficial, but soil microbes exist everywhere, including the tropical areas where African violets would grow naturally. (It's well-documented that orchids coexist with a beneficial fungus.) It's possible the two organisms would benefit from living together again, and adding the fungi is unlikely to harm plants.

Growers wishing to introduce mycorrhizal fungi should find a reputable manufacturer (Great White is the one recommended in the November/December 2021 issue of *AVM*) and follow their usage instructions. If you try it and get good results, let us know!

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Photo credit: Richard Craft

Rob's Slap Happy

Lone Star AV Council Convention & Show

Class: Unusual Container

Exhibited by: Penny Smith-Kerker

Hybridized by: R. Robinson

Semiminiature



Photo credit: Richard Craft

Sinningia
'Ozark Rosy Cheeks'

**Lone Star AV Council
Convention & Show**

Exhibited by: Penny Smith-Kerker
Hybridized by: D. Harris



Photo credit: Richard Craft

Hunter's Sweet Sakura

**Lone Star AV Council
Convention & Show**

Exhibited by: Mary Corondan
Hybridized by: K. Muzalewski
Semiminiature

Southern Food Little Rock Style

By Danny Tidwell

Email: dantwell@yahoo.com

Southern Living lists Little Rock in the “15 Southern Cities All Food Lovers Should Visit.” I am sure you will agree when you sample the amazing cuisine available in and around the downtown area. Here are just a few spots that are mostly within walking distance of the convention hotel, the Little Rock Marriott (most are within three blocks). There are many more in the River Market and across the river in North Little Rock’s Argenta Arts District. Take the trolley across the river and do some exploring.

In Walking Distance

Sonny Williams’ Steak Room — 500 President Clinton Ave., Suite 1. Sonny Williams’ Steak Room offers fine beef, pork, lamb and seafood dishes. It is known for its legendary entrées, along with a vast cocktail and wine selection and delicious desserts. The restaurant has complimentary valet parking.

Samantha’s Tap Room and Wood Grill — 322 Main St. Samantha’s is known as an upscale hop with down-home comfort. It’s the only Arkansas restaurant to have all beer and wine offerings available on tap. The freshest locally-grown ingredients are on hand when possible and meals are prepared over a wood fire. The award-winning restaurant offers a broad selection of appetizers, salads, sandwiches and main courses. Uniquely, all items are à la carte.

Bruno’s Little Italy — 310 Main St. Bruno’s offers Italian food from family recipes; they’ve been in Little Rock since 1949 and are our original home of Italian food.

Wasabi Sushi, Bar & Grill — 101 Main St. A taste of Japan right in Little Rock. The menu includes a wide selection of signature rolls, sushi rolls, hibachi selections, salads, soups and desserts.

David’s Burgers — Downtown River Market, 400 President Clinton Ave. David’s Burgers’ traditional hamburger is made of high-quality beef; their fries are from hand-cut potatoes and made fresh throughout the day. I rank this as probably my all-time favorite burger place.

Flying Fish — 511 President Clinton Ave. The Flying Fish has catfish, tilapia, shrimp and incredible hush puppies, plus specials.

Soul Fish Café — 306 Main St. Southern-good cooking including catfish and trout. And for the real Southern experience — a heaping basket of hush puppies!

Hop on the Trolley and Head Across the River Cregeen’s Irish Pub — 301 Main St., North Little Rock. Fun conversation, good food and the best spirits.

Diamond Bear Brewing Company — 600 N. Broadway, North Little Rock. The Arkansas Ale House is located inside Diamond Bear Brewing Company in North Little Rock. The Ale House serves beer-centric appetizers, burgers, sandwiches, soups, stews and more, and is family friendly.

The Rail Yard — 1212 E. 6th St. The Rail Yard is known for great food trucks and local brews. Enjoy it while soaking up the good vibes of the Arkansas outdoors.

Lost Forty Brewing — 501 Byrd St. Lost Forty is located moments away from the River Market Entertainment District and is an integral part of Little Rock’s booming brewery scene.

Does all of this sound delicious? Make sure you join AVSA for the 2022 Convention in Little Rock from May 29 to June 5.



AVSA 2022 Little Rock Convention Souvenir Book Ads

By Janet Castiglione

Email: jmcvioletcas@gmail.com

This year's convention will be held in Little Rock, Arkansas, from May 29 to June 5. The theme is "Violets Go Hog Wild in Arkansas."

We invite you to advertise in our Convention Souvenir Book for the 2022 AVSA Convention. Ads can be well wishes or advertising and are an excellent way to promote your organization to violet lovers. Ads also help AVSA defray the costs of the convention.

The size of a full-page ad is 8 inches high by 5 inches wide. The cost is \$90. A half-page ad is 4 inches high by 5 inches wide and costs \$50. A quarter-page ad is 2 inches high by 5 inches wide. The rate is \$30. All inside ads will be black and white. We also offer three full-page ads on the inside front cover, inside back cover and outside back cover for \$125 if printed in black and white or \$150 if printed in color. Only cover pages can be in color.

To purchase an ad, please contact:

Janet Castiglione
Souvenir Book Chair
313 Plantation Oak Ave.
Denton, TX 75065
jmcvioletcas@gmail.com

The deadline for ads is April 24. Camera-ready copy is preferred (PDF, Word doc or JPEG file).

Checks or money orders should be made payable to CAAVS and sent to:

Alice Brown
Little Rock Convention Treasurer
65 Sunset Drive
North Little Rock, AR 72118

Thank you in advance for your support!

Parking Information for Little Rock Convention

For those of you driving to the Little Rock Convention, you will be able to receive a \$6 discount on parking at the Convention District Parking Deck, located at the corner of 2nd and Main Street. It's \$6 per car per exit per day. A map of this area will be on the AVSA Convention website soon.

When you enter the parking deck, you will receive a parking ticket. In order to exit the parking deck

and receive your \$6 discount, you will need to show the attendant a stamped parking ticket or a stamped business card. These will be provided by AVSA at the registration desk. If you arrive when registration is not open, a sign at the registration desk will direct you to someone who has the stamped business cards.

Registration for Judging School for Students and Certificate Renewals

By Mary Corondan

Email: judges@avsa.org

AVSA will offer a judging school for members during the 2022 Convention in Little Rock. The school, taught by Barbara Werness, will be Wednesday, June 1. It is geared to people at all knowledge levels and is appropriate as a first-time judging school, to qualify for a certificate renewal or simply as an interesting class for established judges to keep their judging criteria up to date. The school will focus on judging an AVSA show.

Class will begin at 7:30 a.m., last until noon then break for lunch. There will be a practice judging from 1 to 2 p.m. After a short break, the exam will begin at 2:30 p.m. You must attend both sessions to take the exam. (Other than the 7:30 a.m. start, exact times may vary slightly.)

The exam has two parts. Complete Part 1 (50 points) at home as an open-book test. You must turn it in at the beginning of class on June 1. Part 2 (40 points) is a classroom written test, plus point scoring of two specimen African violet plants (10 points). Part 1 of the exam will be emailed to each registered student on May 6 (USPS available on request).

You must present a current AVSA membership card and judge's card (if already a judge) at the door. If you have your proof of three blue ribbons, that documentation should be presented. Since proof of three blue ribbons is currently being waived, you may take the exam; however, a judge's card will not be issued until Barbara Werness receives proof of three blue ribbons. There are no requirements for those who wish to audit the school.

The class is geared to people at all knowledge levels and is appropriate as a first-time judging school, to qualify for a certificate renewal or simply as an interesting class for established judges.

All students must bring a current copy of the "Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges" (13th Edition, revised May 2016) to the school. Although the 14th edition will be available for sale at this convention, it will not be used for this exam.

The \$15 registration fee applies to all who attend the judging school to take the test or audit the class. Registration information will be posted at www.africanvioletocietyofamerica.org under the Participate tab. Click on Next Convention to access the materials. Do not send payment to the teacher. Registration forms and payments are due by May 4.

Never Again:

The African Violets I Left Behind

By Rich Follett

Email: secretary@avsa.org

Well, I have done it again. There I was, at an absolutely beautiful AVSA affiliate show in Fort Worth, Texas (my first in two years, due to the pandemic), and as I viewed the nearly 250 exquisite exhibits, I realized I was once again my own worst enemy because I talked myself out of bringing any of my own African violets to enter for fear that they would not measure up. Don't get me wrong — I have no illusions that anything I have grown would win Best in Show or even Best in Class — but I am certain that my efforts would have garnered a blue ribbon or two and helped to make the show even more full and exciting.

The process is the same every time: About three months before every show, I start combing over my light stands looking for likely candidates. I set them aside and give them special attention, including sound practice, tricks of the trade and fervent prayer. By showtime, they look quite good, but never a match for the ideal African violet I had pictured in my mind.

About three weeks before the show, I start flip-flopping in my mind: should I or shouldn't I? A faded blossom here, a water-damaged leaf there and my resolve weakens. In the end, the African violets always stay on the light stand when I get on the plane or load the car. It is a vicious cycle of self-doubt.

I strongly suspect that I am not alone in this strange and unhealthy routine, which is why I have chosen to write about it for the *AVM*. After the Texas show closed, I was talking with a fellow African violet

enthusiast and long-time friend. I expressed my frustration over this maddening and repetitive cycle, and she said, "Well, the only plants that don't win ribbons are the ones that stay at home!" Somehow, hearing this simple truth expressed in such a straightforward manner made me realize how silly I have been to give in to my fear and anxiety show after show.

I was a professional actor for many years, and in that time, I learned that the people sitting on the other side of the audition table want you to be the right one for the part just as much as you want to be the right one for the part. Once I figured that out, my audition success rate went way up. I have figured out that the same principle is at work for an AVSA show. The judges want to give blue ribbons just as badly as we want to receive them.

I am going to bring something to show in Arkansas for the AVSA Convention. I am declaring my intention publicly so there is no way I can change my mind or back out. If it comes time for the show and I have only one blossom on one plant, that plant is coming with me and I will use that one blossom in a design. No matter what, I will be an exhibitor.

Friends, if you are like me, always doubting yourself and leaving your lovely plants at home, take the plunge. We can form a support group and meet just after entries and classifications for mutual affirmation. I know you are out there, and it is time for us to join the ranks of participants. We can do this.

See you in Little Rock.



Photo credit: Richard Craft

***Streptocarpus* 'Heartland's White Gold'**

Lone Star AV Council Convention & Show

Exhibited by: Joanne Schrimsher

Hybridized by: D. Martens

An Ode to the Trailing African Violet

By Debra Turner

Instagram: @thecolorviolet59

Welcome to the African violet's wild side: the trailing violet. Trailing violets are unique in that they form multiple crowns and have a cascading appearance. These beautiful violets were first hybridized in 1954. If you're a collector like me, they really add a nice elegance to your collection.



LE-Pyshechka (E. Lebeteskaia).

Trailing violets are a bit easier to care for than your traditional African violet. They require light watering, indirect sunlight and routine feeding. Otherwise, they don't require a lot of maintenance and love to grow freely.

These beauties have a tendency to produce multiple blooms. They can be left alongside your windowsill, but sometimes I like to use them in hanging baskets so the blooms can flow over the sides. They are a sure pleasure for any flowering plant lover.



T: Rolling Dark Waters. B: Rolling Pink Cloudburst.
(Both: Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses/Sorano)

Here are some tips for identifying and growing trailing African violets. Read the full article by Lisa Kampel in the Learn section of the AVSA website.

- Trailing is an inbred trait and should not be confused with violets that genetically should have only one crown but have been allowed to sucker. True trailers often have more space between leaves on the main stem. This space allows them to have multiple crowns that are not too tightly packed.

- Trailers have two distinct growing habits. Some trailers have short internodes or short distances between successive leaves along the stem. They produce clumping or upright growth habits. Others have long internodes and are more vining, with a sprawling growth habit.

- Grooming trailers is a necessity. All violets need to occasionally have their leaves washed and spent blossoms removed, and that is true for trailers, but grooming leaves is different. Leaves should all be the same size according to their stage of growth, but trailers tend to develop immature and off-sized leaves that need to be removed. Marred, yellowing or limp leaves also need to be removed. You may groom with a pair of tweezers or simply cut or pinch with your fingers.

- An important grooming technique is the removal of leaves to expose center stems. This results in the growth of more dormant crowns. Removal of leaves that crowd or cover other crowns allows the crowns to grow more evenly. Another technique is staking or pinning to train or balance the growth of crowns. After removal of the leaves, small wood stakes or hairpins are used to move the crown to promote proper form.

- If a plant has minimal branching or one dominant leader, trim back the dominant crown. Then, thin the leaves to expose the stem to more light to encourage branching. You can also pinch out the crown to encourage the development of new crowns.



LE-Shotlandskii Veresk (E. Lebeteskaia). Grown by Wilhelmina Allen.



Rob's Boolaroo (R. Robinson). Grown by Sandra Skalski.



Broadway Star Trail. Grown by Pamela VanDurme.



AV Creative Corner: Pressing Blossoms Using Common Household Materials

By Rich Follett

Email: avcreativecorner@gmail.com

Pressing African violet blossoms is fun, inexpensive and a great way to get material for crafting and personalization of all sorts. Pressed blossoms are superb for decorating homemade greeting cards, stationery, picture frames, journal covers, paperweights and many other household and gift items. The potential uses are endless.

To start, you need a selection of fresh-picked African violet blooms. Be sure to pick them just at their peak; one day after watering is best. Make sure the blossoms are clean and dry. Beginners should try some of the pinks, purples or reds first, as they tend not to brown out as often or as much as lighter hues.

The other materials you need are a heavy book and two pieces of absorbent, smooth-surfaced paper. Watercolor paper or sketch paper is ideal, but if you do not have either of those available, two pieces of clean white printer paper will work almost as well. Paper towels and other textured papers are not a good idea because their patterns will imprint on the blooms.

To press your blossoms, open the book (leave the back cover flat on the table) and insert a clean sheet of absorbent paper. Arrange the blossoms on the paper so that they are not touching. Layer the other sheet of paper on top gently but steadily. Close the book carefully and weigh it down with a heavy object such as another book, a brick or stone, a closed jar of jelly or a large can of vegetables.

Resist all temptation to peek until one week has passed! After one week, open the book carefully and check on your blossoms. Remove any that have decayed, rotted, faded, browned out or pressed in undesirable shapes. Leave the successful ones alone. Close the book back up again, with the blossoms sandwiched as they were before.

Check on them again in another week. Repeat as before if any have rotted, faded or browned out. Double blossoms may take up to three weeks to dry completely, depending on humidity and temperatures in the drying area.

Once your blossoms have dried, they will keep for quite some time in small plastic bags or containers. You can use plain craft glue to attach them to your desired objects. They look particularly nice around a hand-copied verse or original poem. Wouldn't pressed blooms look pretty on white plastic eggs for Easter?

Once you have glued them in place, you can finish them with a fixative like the one charcoal pastel artists use (available at any craft or art supply store) or a coat of clear acrylic if you have used them to decorate



Lay out fresh, clean, dry blossoms on pieces of white paper set inside a heavy book.

a more substantial object like a round rock (for a paperweight) or a brick (for a doorstop). The more you use them to decorate, the more ideas you will have!



Pressed African violets are wonderful for projects of all kinds, including greeting cards.

If you finish a project you are particularly proud of, please take a picture and send it to me at avcreativecorner@gmail.com. I would love to feature some of

your handiwork in future editions of *AVM* (proper credit will be given, of course).

I received some wonderful responses to the haiku prompt in the November/December issue of *AVM*. These first two are from Dorothy Charron:

*Memories come home;
Present relationships form:
From violets born ...*

*Various colors
Throughout four seasons they bloom
Enchanting our homes*

And this sweet memory is from AVSA Past President Joyce Stork:

*Burgundy blossoms
Evoke thoughts of former days.
Kent hybridizing.*

Thank you both for your lovely contributions. This is what the AV Creative Corner is all about!

If you have any ideas for future Creative Corner features, please send them to avcreativecorner@gmail.com. I am always eager to hear about new ways to express creativity. A byline will be given for all suggestions and submissions appearing in this column.

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bloomlala.com/collections/violet



The Importance of Watching Your Violet Collection as a Whole

By Tony Freedland

Email: anthonyfreedland@yahoo.com

For the last few years, I've been exclusively wick watering all plants with great results. I grow my plants in a mix of 40% Pro-Mix HP to 60% perlite. Up until recently, my humidity was always between 40 to 60%.

When I moved to a new apartment, I was starting to see my humidity average 70%. With this higher humidity, all my starts (newly-planted plugs from a leaf pot) were starting to wither away. I almost lost several Cajun's Midnight Mayhem starts, and my whole collection of 60 large standards was having issues.

prevent this problem in the future, I am planning to buy a dehumidifier for the summer months (since it's winter, I am top watering for now). I am witnessing all of my starts rebounding and growing fast.

The point of all of this is that it's important to watch your collection as a whole. If something is wrong with most of your plants, identify what is wrong and find a solution. Act immediately before further damage is done.

For instance, if you set up a new rack of violets and notice that all your plants' leaves are growing really long and leggy, it's not a problem with the plants. It's a problem with the culture. If you aren't sure what is causing a problem with your collection, ask others! There are many Facebook groups dedicated to identifying and solving plant problems, or you can find resources on the AVSA website. Once the problem is identified, you can find ways to solve it. But if you don't act now, your conditions will become a bigger chronic problem.

Most of us have spent a fortune on our plants, and we want them to grow big and beautiful. That's why it's important to adjust your culture as soon as possible. You will not be disappointed.



As soon as I saw the plants starting to wilt, I knew I had to take immediate action. First, I took all my plants off wick watering to let them dry a bit. To

Fun Facts about the Honor Roll of African Violets

By Trudy Brekel

Email: bestvariety@avsa.org

I went through the yearly Honor Roll of African Violets list from 1960 to present. In doing so, I discovered the following interesting facts.

- In 1961, 21 plants made the honor roll, which was the largest number of plants in the years that I had available. The next best year was 1980, with 18 plants making the honor roll.
- The hybridizer with the most plants on the honor roll in the 1960s was Eyerdom.
- Lyndon Lyon also had lots of plants registered from the 1960s to the 1990s. In 1969, there were nine plants on the honor roll, and eight of those plants were hybridized by L. Lyon.

- In 1979, the first semiminiature made the honor roll. The plant was Dora Baker (2084), hybridized by V. Lorenze.
- In 1980, the first miniature made the honor roll. The plant was Midget Bon Bon (2282), hybridized by E. Champion.
- 1980 was also the year the first trailer made the honor roll. The plant was Pixie Blue (2598), hybridized by L. Lyon.
- From 1990 to today, the number of miniatures and semiminiatures is about equal to the number of standards on the honor roll.



Photo credit: Richard Craft

Buckeye Nostalgia

Lone Star AV Council Convention & Show

Exhibited by: Wayne Geeslin
Hybridized by: P. Hancock
Standard

Membership includes: Welcome package for new members; Quarterly issues of *Gesneriads*, the Journal for Gesneriad Growers; access to the Seed Fund; downloadable PDF copies of the journal



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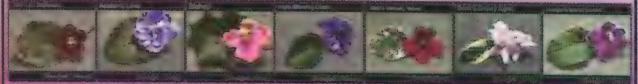
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- Official Correspondence:** AVSA Secretary, P.O. Box 22417, Beaumont, TX 77720. *Email:* secretary@avsa.org.

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- New or Renewal Membership:** Membership application on white protective cover of *AVM* or at www.africanvioletocietyofamerica.org/avsa-membership. Send check payable to AVSA in U.S. dollars from a U.S. bank; VISA or Mastercard for new or renewable membership to AVSA Office; or pay online.
- Change of Address:** Send new address to AVSA Office at least 30 days before it is to take effect, along with old address.
- Membership Cards:** Sent to Associate Members. Renewing members receive card on white protective cover of *AVM*.
- Membership and Promotion Committee:** Send ideas, offers to help and requests for assistance to Stephen Covolo-Hudson. *Email:* memberpromo@avsa.org.
- Affiliate Committee:** For information on how to organize a chapter, write Jeri Anderson. *Email:* affiliate@avsa.org.

■ Shows and Judges

- Shows and Judges Committee:** Mary Corondan. *Email:* judges@avsa.org.
- Show Schedule Approval:** For information on Shows, AVSA Awards and approving schedules, email Susan Anderson at showschedule@avsa.org and attach a copy of your show schedule.
- Order AVSA Rosettes:** SSA Packet with no rosettes \$5. Orders for rosettes must be specific as to which is needed — standard, species, mini-semi; they can be mixed color and size, all same price. All rosettes are \$6 each, added to price of SSA packet.
- Judging School:** To register a judging school, send request to Ruth Loomis. *Email:* ruthloomis@msn.com. A registration fee of \$15 is required and should be sent to the AVSA Office.
- Judges' Duplicate Cards:** Send self-addressed, stamped envelope to Mary Corondan, 434 Plumwood Way, Fairview, TX 75069. *Email:* judges@avsa.org.

■ AVSA Fundraising

- Fundraising:** Randy G. Deutsch, Chair. *Email:* fundraising@avsa.org.
- Funds:** Booster Donations, Boyce Edens Research Fund, The Barbara Burde Endowment Fund, Tinari Endowment Fund.
- Payment:** Contribute through the website or mail to AVSA Office; please designate fund.

■ African Violet Magazine

- AVM Editor:** Sophia Bennett, P.O. Box 22417, Beaumont, TX 77720. *Email:* editor@avsa.org.
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- Articles, Columns and Memorials:** Send to Editor by publication deadline.
- Coming Events:** Send to Editor or fill out event form on www.africanvioletocietyofamerica.org by publication deadline.
- Advertising Rates and Information:** Richard Craft, Chair. *Email:* advertising@avsa.org. Send advertising to Chair by publication deadline.
- Back Issues:** Complete your set now. Request price list of available issues from AVSA Office. Send SASE for list or download from the AVSA Store.

■ International Registrar

- Plant Registration:** Joe Bruns. *Email:* registration@avsa.org.
- Master Varieties List (AMVL) & Supplements:** Download from AVSA website or order from AVSA office for \$2. Orders in writing only. Send any correction and/or description of new cultivars with hybridizer's name to: Joe Bruns, Plant Registration (see above).
- Research:** Send suggested projects for scientific research or names of interested, qualified, potential research personnel to Dr. Jeff Smith. *Email:* jsmith4@bsu.edu.
- AVSA Scholarship Program:** Charles Ramser. *Email:* scholarship@avsa.org.

■ AVSA Convention

- Convention:** Kathy Lahti, Convention Chair. *Email:* convention@avsa.org.
- Future Dates:** If interested in sponsoring a national convention in your area, contact Convention Chair.
- Convention Programs:** Send special requests for workshop programs or interesting speakers to Convention Chair.
- Convention Awards:** Send suggestions to Vickie Crider. *Email:* awards@avsa.org. Send contributions to AVSA Office.
- Commercial Activities, Sales and Exhibits:** For information on convention entries or sales room, contact Kathy Bell. *Email:* commercials@avsa.org.

Join, renew and learn more at www.africanvioletocietyofamerica.org

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African Violet MAGAZINE

Volume 75 Number 2

ON THIS COVER:

Harmony's Little Stinker

Grown by: Willy Martinez

Hybridized: Harmony Greenhouses

Standard

Photo credit: Willy Martinez



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African Violet Society of America

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Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.



President's Message

By Susan Anderson

Email: president@avsa.org

Spring is here and blooms are popping up on my African violets. Their colorful flowers and fuzzy leaves are such a delight! There is an entire tray of Solo cups filled with baby plantlets sitting on my plant stand, ready to be potted up and grown out. Each new little plant is destined to bring joy to someone's life.

Spring Forth

Just as our plants are budding out, many of our AVSA affiliates are making plans to host their spring shows and sales. Each month, a few more events are listed on the AVSA website. There is a strong desire to reconnect and share the pleasure of growing these amazing houseplants. Nowadays, we all need something to look forward to, so review the calendar on page 12 and make plans now to reconnect with African violet friends.

For local clubs hosting spring events, please share your experiences and reach out to nearby affiliates. Together, we can help each other along the way. Any lessons learned or happenings would make wonderful articles for the *AVM*. Consider submitting some high-resolution pictures too; we would love to see your beautiful plants and smiling faces.

Preparing for Convention

AVSA is well underway in preparing for the Little Rock convention, which will be our first in-person event in over two years. Are you as excited as I am? All members are invited to attend and encouraged to participate. Every African violet lover should experience an AVSA convention at least once. There will be so much to see and do!

Convention information and online registration is available on the AVSA website. Some will notice

prices have increased slightly. Our AVSA Convention Committee has diligently negotiated the best rates possible; however, as you are likely aware, the cost of goods and services have been rising due to supply chain issues and labor shortages. Unfortunately, AVSA is not immune to the impact. We have attempted to keep registration fees as low as possible while continuing to offer the amenities our convention attendees have come to expect. I trust you will understand and respect the reasoning. AVSA is also closely monitoring the impacts of COVID-19 and will comply with CDC guidelines and specific requirements of our host venue and state.

Bylaws and Director Candidates

During convention, the Board of Directors will be meeting to discuss and decide on business of the society. Several amendments to the AVSA bylaws are presented on page 9 of the *AVM*.

Each year, five candidates for Director are elected to the Board during the AVSA Annual Membership meeting. Please get to know them by reviewing their bios on page 6. The election process is quite significant because the elected members join the leadership ranks of AVSA to ensure the future of our society. By accepting the nomination, these members have agreed to commit their time, skills and resources to serving AVSA at their own expense. If you are interested in serving AVSA too, please submit your application to the Nominating Committee. It is AVSA's members that keep the society strong. Thank you for your support.

Our world is already facing so many challenges, and we're sad to have another one. Our hearts and thoughts are with our friends in Ukraine, Russia and surrounding countries.



Editor's Notes

By Sophia Bennett

Email: editor@avsa.org

Several readers have given me great feedback on the organizational changes we made beginning with the January/February 2022 issue of *AVM*.

One reader pointed out that they weren't sure what the color bars by the side of some articles meant. Those are intended to designate different types of articles: AVSA news (purple), feature articles (green), convention updates (peach) and our new Color Commentary section (pink). We've added those colors to the table of contents to give you an ongoing reminder of their purpose.

We tried something new with the cover this time around. Many of you have probably seen Willy Martinez's gorgeous photos of perfectly symmetrical African violets set against a white background. He submitted several pictures to accompany his interview with Bill Chaney on page 30, and we thought his *Harmony's Little Stinker* would make a striking cover image. Do you agree or disagree? Let me know.

Last, we're attempting to fill more of the blank spaces with quick AVSA updates or growing tips from members. If you have a short piece of

growing advice to share, please email it to me for inclusion in an upcoming magazine.

Another way you can contribute to the magazine is with our upcoming Article Contest. We're looking for reader submissions that share basic growing and showing tips (what we're calling beginner/intermediate articles) or take a more scientific approach to topics such as African violet culture and hybridizing (what we're calling advanced articles). There will be prizes for the winners! Get more details on page 11.

In our piece on past *AVM* covers in the last issue, an article from 2016 jumped out at me: Bruce Pearson's musings on what African violet he would keep if he could only have one. I thought that idea was so fun that we asked AVSA members, "If you could only have one African violet, what plant would you choose and why?" Their responses are on page 58, along with a few photos of the plants mentioned. You'll see more photos of the African violets our readers chose scattered throughout the magazine. I hope you enjoy this article and the rest of the issue.

African Violet Magazine Article and Column Deadlines

- January/February issue: November 1
- March/April issue: January 1
- May/June issue: March 1

- July/August issue: May 1
- September/October issue: July 1
- November/December issue: September 1

We would love to hear from you! Please send articles or article ideas for the *AVM* to Sophia Bennett at editor@avsa.org.



Photo credit: Irina Kabanova and Elena Trofimenko

KT-Zhuravli

Cyber Diamond Convention

Hybridized by: I. Kabanova and E. Trofimenko
Standard

Board of Directors Nominations for 2022

Each year, the AVSA Nominating Committee develops a slate of candidates for upcoming board positions. This year, we have one nominee for the position of Officer and five nominees for the position of Director. Members will vote the week of the AVSA National Convention in Little Rock, Arkansas (May 29 to June 5). Get to know our nominees below and be sure to vote this spring.



Rich Follett
Strasburg, Virginia
Secretary

I joined AVSA as a Life Member in 2002 at the Washington, D.C., convention and hit the ground running. In the years since, I have served on various committees, written dozens of articles and authored two columns for *AVM*, survived a turn as a National Convention Chair (Cherry Hill, NJ, 2011), served on the AVSA Board of Directors, hybridized a registered variety or two, and proudly earned (and used) a Senior Judge credential. Along the way, I have made friendships to last a lifetime and instigated no small amount of mischief. Despite expert coaching and state-of-the-art support from AVSA friends far and near, I still cannot get an African violet to bloom on schedule for a national show, even with fervent prayer and painstaking attention to detail. I remain undeterred.



Samuel C. (Sam) Cunningham
Houston, Texas
Director

I grew up in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and moved to Houston in 1980 after having been a hospital corpsman in the U.S. Navy. I

continued my education to become a licensed vocational nurse. I worked in many fields of nursing until early 2005, when I went on to earn my bachelor's and master's degrees in human services from Springfield College.

I started growing African violets in 2010, when my husband tried and failed to grow six of them in our kitchen. I somehow was able to revive them, and it's been a wild ride since. In no time, I had a full plant stand, then another and another. I ended up converting the spare bedroom into a plant room. Over the next couple of years, I experimented with lighting, soil mixes, additives and techniques that would make most experienced growers cringe.

In 2015, I became a member of the Spring Branch African Violet Club, Gesneriad Society and Lone Star African Violet Council. I have been participating in many activities with all of them. I became an AVSA Student Judge in 2020 and clerked in my first convention here in Houston, where I won Best Novelty/Unusual Saintpaulia Foliage-Best in Class for my Senk's Anemone.

I retired in 2018 and now spend most of my working hours with my African violets and other gesneriads. Since 2020, I've been hybridizing, and within the next year or so I should have some named varieties of my own to register with AVSA. I love learning new trends in growing and cultivating plants.

I've been inspired by some of the greats of the AVSA community to participate and thrive in this great institution. It's an honor to be considered a candidate as an AVSA Director.



Marge Farrand
Ann Arbor, Michigan
Director

I became interested in African violets in my mid-20s when my first mother-in-law gave me a couple plants that a friend of hers had grown in his basement.

My own mom was an avid outdoor gardener, and I inherited her love of plants. I had never seen violets so beautiful before and was determined to learn how to keep them healthy. Soon, I had a light stand filled with plants and the rest is history!

I attended the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and have lived there ever since. I started my career by teaching both elementary school and high school math. I made a career change after about 15 years and began working for IBM in sales and sales management. I was fortunate to retire from IBM in my mid-50s and have been able to devote much more time to this wonderful hobby since then. That also gave me a chance to pursue other interests. My husband and I enjoy golf, pickleball and biking, among other activities.

When I retired, I joined the Michigan State AVS. That has been a wonderful opportunity to learn about growing the plants, sell some of the ones I've grown and spend time with some wonderful people who share the same interest. The crown of violet education occurs at the Judging Schools, Judges Council meetings and in judging local and national shows. I have now reached the level of Senior Judge but find there is always something to learn.

About 10 years ago, Donna Turner and I started the Wayne Washtenaw African Violet Club. I am also a member of the Ohio State AVS, Vice President of the Michigan State AVS and serve on the AVSA Fundraising Committee. When the national convention was held in Detroit in 2012, I served as the Show Chair.

I am pleased and honored to be nominated for the Board of Directors and to have an opportunity to give back to the hobby that has brought so much joy to my life.



Jackie Leitzel
New Columbia,
Pennsylvania
Director

I am the wife of a retired U.S. Navy sailor. I have been married for 31 years and have two adult children. We grew up in

Central Pennsylvania but spent much of my husband's career stationed in Norfolk, Virginia. In October 2020, we packed up everything, sold our home, purchased the land he grew up on, built a house and are figuring out this new life day by day. We now live closer to our parents and can spend more time with them.

I worked for a law firm in Virginia Beach, and when it was time for me to resign and move, I was given the opportunity to continue with my job working remotely. I still go to the Virginia Beach office occasionally, which means I get to visit friends as well as our daughter, who still lives there.

Virginia Beach is where I truly found my love for African violets, which my neighbor introduced me to. I found a flyer for the Tidewater African Violet Society, so we joined it and AVSA in 2018.

I showed for the first time at the 2019 Tidewater AVS show. I was also introduced to the Mid-Atlantic AVS and participated in my first show in November 2019, where I won Best in Show with Wrangler's Dixie Celebration and Best in Show in the design division with my natural garden entry. It was an amazing show that I hope to never forget. I currently serve as the Membership Chair for the Mid-Atlantic AVS and oversee the Facebook page for it and Tidewater AVS. I've been nominated to serve as Secretary for the Mid-Atlantic AVS beginning in November.

I am excited to have been nominated for a position as a Director for the AVSA and look forward to the upcoming year and getting back to in-person shows.



Bill Patterson
Phoenix, Arizona
Director

I retired after 31 years of teaching instrumental music at the end of the spring semester of 2011. While I was still working, I served as President of the

Deer Valley Unified School District teachers association and President of the Arizona Music Educators Association. After retiring, I was hired by Northern Arizona University in the Professional Education Programs unit as a supervisor of student teachers. From 1990 to present, I have served multiple terms for the Starlight Pines Homeowners Association as President, Vice President, Treasurer and Member-at-Large.

All my life, I have been interested in outdoor gardening and indoor plants. In the early 1980s, I became interested in African violets. For 12 years, I grew and propagated them. My career became primary and time for the violets dwindled.

After retirement in 2011, I was walking through a Lowe's store and saw a sad, withered display of violets. I grabbed one and thought, "You look as if you still have some promise, and with my tender loving care, you could be reinvigorated." Sure enough, it thrived and bloomed and I was hooked again! Soon after, I joined both the Desert Sun African Violet and Gesneriad Society and the Copper State African Violet Club in the Phoenix area. I've been a member of both since the fall of 2017 and am serving as an officer in both clubs.

I first attended a National Convention in 2019 in Houston, Texas, and attended the virtual conventions in 2020 and 2021. In October 2021, I attended the Lone Star African Violet Council Show and Sale in Fort Worth, Texas.

During the COVID pandemic, I hosted Zoom virtual meetings for both Phoenix-area violet clubs. That led to writing an article for the *AVM*. It was published in the July/August 2020 edition.



April Van Ness
Hamilton Square,
New Jersey
Director

The absolute beauty of African violet blooms and leaves is what drew me into growing and learning more about them.

I am a full-time American Baptist pastor whose office houses 21 African violet plants and a bunch of babies. My church members laugh and say that the plants do so well because they are on holy ground. Of course, I know that it takes more than location for a plant to grow, so tending to them relaxes me on those stressful days.

I became involved with the Garden State African Violet Club when the meeting dates finally fit into my schedule and I haven't regretted a single moment. Thanks to the expertise of our past officers, I have learned so much. I have enjoyed clerking at our local show as well as at the Mid-Atlantic AVS show.

I am presently serving as Vice President in the Garden State club and am tasked with setting up programs for each of our meetings. I have spoken to several women's groups, showing them how to start plants from leaves, and have helped other "newbies" embrace this hobby. I share as many leaves as possible, for that's a great way to get others to enjoy growing.

While I only have shown in two shows, I believe that growing African violets is something that anyone can do and enjoy whether they choose to show or not. Yet, as soon as people start growing, they get closer and closer to showing for the first time. To me, it's a perfect hobby, for it embraces the beauty of nature and the mysterious process of growth. I look forward to helping others embrace this hobby with as much love and passion as I have, for I know that it will lower stress levels as well as bring them joy.

Notice of Proposed Amendments to AVSA Bylaws

Notice is hereby given that the following proposed amendments to AVSA Bylaws will be voted on at the AVSA 2022 Annual Convention in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Article VI

Meetings and Communications

Section 1

■ **New Section 1. (Renumber Sections)**

Meetings:

1. Meetings of AVSA membership, its Board of Directors, Executive Committee and all subordinate groups subject to these bylaws, and any committees which may hereafter be formed, may be held electronically, in whole or in part, as long as all participants can hear each other simultaneously and can participate during the meeting.

2. When authorized by the Board of Directors, and subject to the guidelines and procedures as the Board of Directors may adopt, members not physically present at a meeting of the corporation may, by means of remote communication:

a. Participate in a properly noticed meeting of members, and

b. Be deemed present in person and vote at a meeting of members, whether the meeting is held at a designated place or held wholly or in part by means of remote communication, provided that:

(i) The corporation implements reasonable and adequate procedures to verify that each person deemed present at the meeting by means of remote communication is a member, and

(ii) When any member votes at the meeting by means of remote communication, a record of such vote or such other action shall be maintained by the corporation.

Section 2. (Previously 1)

■ **Annual Meeting:**

Insert paragraph 2.

1. No change
2. Forty-five days' notice shall be required for membership meetings.
3. No change.

Section 3. (Previously 2)

■ **Special Meetings:**

No change

Section 4. (Previously 3)

■ **Quorums:**

Change to:

Quorums at any AVSA membership meetings shall be fifty (50) individual members, each of whom must (a) show his/her current membership card for entrance into the meeting room, or (b) must be verified by the Secretary in an electronic meeting.

Delete current Section 4. (Incorporated in New Section 1 above)

Article VII

Board of Directors

Section 3

■ **Votes:**

1. A vote by mail or by use of an electronic service designated by the Board of Directors for the meeting is authorized.
2. Unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws, a two-thirds (2/3) vote is required for action by the Board of Directors at a meeting at which a quorum is present in person, electronically or in combination.
3. A verified report of any action taken by mail or by use of any electronic service by the Board of Directors at an authorized meeting shall be made a part of the minutes of the meeting.

Article X
Committees
Section I

■ **Standing Committees:**

Article X, Section 1, paragraph 17 currently reads:

17. WEBSITE: shall be responsible for coordinating and implementing the functions associated with maintenance of the AVSA website.

If adopted, Article X, Section 1, paragraph 17 would read:

17. TECHWEB: shall be responsible for coordinating and implementing all functions associated with hardware, software, technology support, and support and maintenance of the AVSA website.

Article XII

Amendments to the Bylaws

These Bylaws may be amended at any annual business meeting or special meeting of the membership by a two-thirds (2/3) vote at which a quorum is present in person, electronically or in combination, provided that the changes have been:

a. Approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Directors for consideration by the membership; and

b. Distributed to the membership at least forty-five (45) days prior to the meeting at which they are to be considered, or without notice, by a nine-tenths (9/10) vote.



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African Violet Society of America Inc.**



African Violet Magazine Article Contest

By Sophia Bennett

Email: editor@avsa.org

AVSA and its Publications Committee are re-opening the Article Contest to generate new content for *African Violet Magazine*. The contest will bring interesting new insights and ideas to African violet lovers — and is offering prizes to six lucky winners.

The Article Contest will accept submissions between March 1 and December 31, 2022. Anyone is welcome to send one or more articles relevant to growing, showing or hybridizing African violets. Entries will be accepted in two categories:

- Beginner/intermediate: articles designed to offer more basic tips; and
- Advanced: pieces with a more scientific take on topics.

Articles should be between 500 and 2,000 words. Please include pictures or illustrations if possible. Photos and other artwork must be high resolution (at least 300 dpi).

All submissions will be edited as needed. Edits will be discussed with the writer, and authors will have a chance to review articles before they are published. We strongly encourage even beginning writers or people who don't consider themselves strong writers to submit articles. If you have good information to share, we are happy to help you craft a piece that you are proud of. Articles will be judged on the quality of the finished piece, not the initial submission.

Keep in mind that *AVM* strives to provide African violet enthusiasts with information-rich stories they can use as they are growing and showing plants

and designs. Articles filled with practical advice and tips will fare better in the contest than personal stories about one person's passion or connection to African violets.

Articles will run in *AVM* beginning with the May/June 2022 issue. While we will endeavor to run all articles in 2022, some may be pushed into early 2023 if there are enough submissions. AVSA reserves the right to not publish any articles it deems unfit for the magazine. Writers must sign a waiver declaring that their work is original. Please cite sources when appropriate.

A panel of five judges will review the articles and pick a first-, second- and third-place winner in each category. Pieces will be judged on considerations such as the quality of the information shared, enjoyable and relatable storytelling, and suitability of the story for the publication. A complete rubric describing the judging criteria is available on the AVSA website. Contest winners will be announced at the 2023 AVSA Convention and in the July/August 2023 issue of *AVM*.

This year, prizes will include vintage and AVSA collectible items, recognition in the magazine and on the AVSA website, and "first in line" opportunities for the convention sales room. A complete list of prizes will be available on the AVSA website soon.

Submissions and questions about the 2022 Article Contest should be emailed to *AVM* Editor Sophia Bennett at editor@avsa.org or mailed to the AVSA office.

Coming Events

Check the AVSA Events page (www.africanviolet.societyofamerica.org/events), search the local club on Facebook or contact the organizers listed below for the latest information on these events.

■ March 12 — Florida

First Lakeland African Violet Society
Spring Obsession Plant Sale
(sponsored by the Lakeland Rotary Club)
Lake Crago Park
525 Lake Crago Drive
Lakeland, FL
Saturday: 8 a.m.-3 p.m.
Mary Jane DiLorenzo: mjdilo92@gmail.com

■ March 18-19 — Texas

First African Violet Society of Denton
2022 Annual AVSA Judged Show and Sale
First Presbyterian Church (Erwin Hall)
1114 W. University Drive
Denton, TX
Friday: 1-4 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Janet Castiglione: jmcvioletcas@gmail.com
Linda Turner: texasblackcow@yahoo.com

■ March 19-20 — Illinois

Northern Illinois Gesneriad Society
Show and Sale
Chicago Botanic Garden
1000 Lake Cook Road
Glencoe, IL
Saturday and Sunday: 10:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Susan Bradford: asusan.bradford@abbie.com
www.nigesneriads.org

■ March 25-26 — Florida

Heart of Jacksonville African Violet Society
Display and Sale
San Jose Church of Christ
6233 San Jose Blvd.
Jacksonville, FL
Friday and Saturday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Bobbi Johannsen: bobbibiz@bellsouth.net
Emi Kimbrough: emikimbrough@gmail.com

■ April 2 — Connecticut

Windsor African Violet Society
Annual Show and Sale
Grace Episcopal Church
311 Broad St.
Windsor, CT
Saturday: 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
Joyce Dickey: joycedickey@yahoo.com

■ April 2 — Michigan

Michigan State African Violet Society
Display and Sale
Matthaei Botanical Gardens
1800 N. Dixboro Road
Ann Arbor, Michigan
Saturday: 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Lynn Allen: lynnallen0413@comcast.net

■ April 2 — Washington

Seattle African Violet Society and Puget Sound
Gesneriad Society
Display and Plant Sale
Volunteer Park Conservatory
1400 E. Galer St.
Seattle, WA
Saturday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Jennifer Lambert: Jlambert1@outlook.com
www.seattleviolets.com
www.volunteerparkconservatory.org

■ April 8-9 — Minnesota

African Violet Society of Minnesota
69th Annual AVSA Affiliate Show
Northtown Mall
398 Northtown Drive
Blaine, MN
Friday: 10 a.m.-7 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Jude Neumann: jude.neumann@frontiernet.net

■ **April 9 — Delaware**

Delaware African Violet and Gesneriad Society
Display and Sale
Bosco's Department Store
Christiana Town Center
361 W. Main St.
Christiana, DE
Saturday: 11 a.m.-4 p.m.
Barb Borleske: bborleske@yahoo.com

■ **April 9-10 — Virginia**

Richmond African Violet Society
Show and Sale
Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden
1800 Lakeside Ave.
Richmond, VA
Saturday: 1-5 p.m.
Sunday: 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Sharon Long: Slong15781@aol.com

■ **April 10 — Ontario**

Toronto African Violet and Gesneriad Society
Annual Show and Sale
Toronto Botanical Gardens
777 Lawrence Ave. E
North York, Ontario
Sunday: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Brett Flewelling: brettff@cogeco.ca

■ **April 23 — Ontario**

Lakeshore African Violet Society of Toronto
Show and Sale
St. Philip's Lutheran Church
61 W. Deane Park Drive
Etobicoke, Ontario
Saturday: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Beverley Williams:
beverleyandbrucewilliams@rogers.com
Doris Brownlie: jbrownlie@idirect.com
www.lakeshoreavs.com

■ **April 23 — Texas**

NASA Area African Violet Society
Spring Sale and Display
Bay Harbour United Methodist Church
3459 FM 518 E.
League City, TX
Saturday: 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Dianne Duggan: ddgcampbell@earthlink.net

■ **April 23-24 — Louisiana**

Louisiana Lagniappe AVS
(formerly Sundowners AVS)
Show and Sale
Baton Rouge Garden Center

7950 Independence Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA
Saturday: 1-5 p.m.
Sunday: 11 a.m.-3 p.m.
George Ramirez: gramirez1040@gmail.com

■ **April 23-24 — New York**

AVGSS of Syracuse, New York
Show and Sale
Beaver Lake Nature Center
8477 E. Mud Lake Road
Baldwinsville, NY
Saturday: 1-6 p.m.
Sunday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Ann Kelly: AKelly002@twcnny.rr.com

■ **April 23-24 — New York**

Capital District African Violet Society
Annual Show and Sale
Bethany Reformed Church
760 New Scotland Ave.
Albany, NY
Saturday: 1-4 p.m.
Sunday: 12-4 p.m.
Heidi Dillenbeck: heidisviolets@aol.com

■ **April 30 — Missouri**

Sho-Me African Violet Club
Galaxies of Violets Show
Jacob L. Losse Garden Center
5200 Wornall Road
Kansas City, MO
Saturday: 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Linda Hall: llhall@grm.net

■ **April 30-May 1 — Virginia**

Tidewater African Violet Society
Show and Sale
Norfolk Botanical Gardens
6700 Azalea Garden Road
Norfolk, VA
Saturday: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Sunday: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Pat Knight: kemts@cox.net

■ **April 30-May 1 — Wisconsin**

Oshkosh Violet Society
Show and Sale
St. Jude the Apostle Church Hall
531 Knapp St.
Oshkosh, WI
Saturday: 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Sunday: 11:30 a.m.-3 p.m.
Kevin Degner: kevin_degner@sbcglobal.net
Doug Kindschuh: dougsoasis@yahoo.com

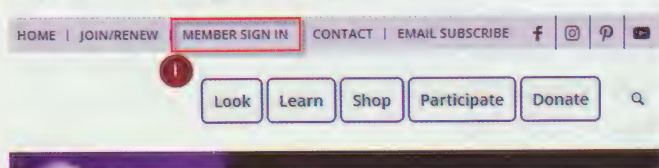
How to Create an Account on the AVSA Website

By Candace Baldwin

Email: website@avsa.org

Keeping your information current with AVSA is easier than ever. Need to update your contact info? Renew your membership? You no longer need to write an email, send a letter or make a phone call; you can do it online instead. If you haven't already created an account on the AVSA website, follow the steps below to start one. (If you have already created an account but are having trouble logging in, please contact the webmaster at avsa@accounts.avsa.org.)

1. Go to the AVSA website, www.africanvioletsocietyofamerica.org, and select Member Sign In.



2. Choose "Forgot Username?"

Password request

Enter the Username for your user account, then click Submit. We will email you a link to a page where you can easily create a new password.

Username

Submit

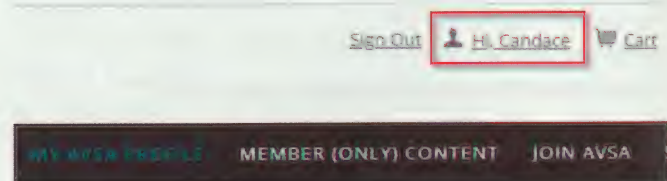
Cancel

3. Enter your email address to retrieve your user name. If the system cannot locate your email address, please contact the webmaster at avsa@accounts.avsa.org.

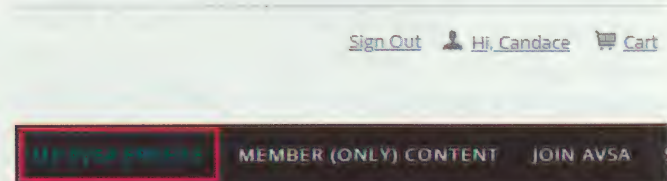
Enter the email address associated with your AVSA membership.

4. You will receive an email with a link to complete your login. If you do not have an email account, please call the AVSA office at (409) 839-4725 to make updates.

Once your online account is created, you can sign in to update your contact information, renew your membership and access members-only AVSA content. How do you know that you're signed in? Look for your name in the top right corner of the web page.



Select My AVSA Profile to update your contact information, see previous payments made or pay your membership dues.



For additional assistance, contact avsa@accounts.avsa.org.

Violets Most Wanted List

By Mary Thompson, Chair, Violet Preservation Committee

Email: preservingviolets@avsa.org

Easter is fast approaching. Wouldn't it be great if the Easter bunny could leave a long-lost violet for someone? Shows will be happening soon, so if you are going, be on the lookout for one of these

Admiral
Commodore
David Lee
Denver Doll

Dorlene
Georgia-Lover
Original 10
Sailor Boy

beauties. If you find one or have one yourself, please email the Violet Preservation Committee with your contact information so we can pass it on to the person looking for that violet.

Young Man's Fancy
Viking
#32

In Memory

Janice O'Neill

It's with a broken heart that we share the news that one of our very best passed away on January 28, 2022. Our friend, mentor, teacher, master grower and all around wonderful human being, Janice O'Neill, passed after a longstanding illness.

The room would light up with Janice's smile and presence, not to mention her great sense of humor. Her basement was full of the most beautiful African violets and gesneriads. Our local shows were always graced with her lovely exhibits and the public benefited from her participation at the education table.

Janice offered so much knowledge and guidance to club members. She was a member of AVSA and served as an AVSA judge. She was also a longtime member in the African Violet Society of Minnesota, North Star AV Council, the AVSA Judges Council of Minnesota and the local gesneriad



clubs. Janice enriched the lives of all who knew her, and she will be terribly missed. — *Barbara Werness*

Tally Time Report

By Susan Anderson

Email: tallytime@avsa.org

Typically, the Tally Time report is an annual summary of the African violet varieties and species receiving the greatest number of awards in AVSA Standard Shows throughout the past year. Regrettably, many affiliates have not been able to hold shows during the past two years due to the pandemic. Although a few shows occurred and reported, the results are not statistically significant due to the very low sample sizes.

Thus, this year's summary is a review of past reports to determine the African violets that won the most

awards from 2015 to 2019. Over this five-year period, 3,913 plants were recorded as winners at 285 shows, as reported to Tally Time. This represents a total of 1,054 different African violet varieties (50 species and 1,004 hybrids). The following presents the African violet varieties that won 20 or more awards at AVSA shows during the five-year period from 2015 to 2019. I'm sure you'll want to add a few to your collection. They are proven winners!

Tally Time Awards 2015-2019

	Variety	Hybridizer	Registration No.	Total No. of Awards
STANDARDS	Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler	P. Hancock	#8745	50
	Jersey Snow Flakes	R. Kurzynski	#9820	40
	Buckeye Nostalgia	P. Hancock	#10484	36
	Frozen in Time	Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses/Sorano	#9167	26
	Rhapsodie Clementine	Holtkamp	#8331	24
	Harbor Blue	T. Weber	#6174	22
	Cajun's Fair Maiden	B. Thibodeaux	#10636	22
	Picasso	M. Tremblay	#6924	21
	Buckeye Seductress	P. Hancock	#9669	21
SEMIMIINIATURES	Ness' Crinkle Blue	D. Ness	#8136	47
	Thunder Surprise	S. Sanders	#9024	30
	Rob's Fuddy Duddy	R. Robinson	#7886	30
	Rob's Outer Orbit	R. Robinson	#8738	23
	Jolly Frills	H. Pittman	#9907	22
	Rob's Combustible Pigeon	R. Robinson	#9462	21
	Mac's Misty Meadow	G. McDonald	#10153	20
MINIATURES	Jolly Orchid	H. Pittman	#9719	65
	Precious Red	H. Pittman	#9724	43
	Orchard's Bumble Magnet	R. Wilson	#8479	37
	Rob's Chilly Willy	R. Robinson	#9461	25

	Variety	Hybridizer	Registration No.	Total No. of Awards
TRLS	Rob's Boolaroo	R. Robinson	#8053	45
	Rob's Gundaroo	R. Robinson	#9294	22
SPECIES	S. 5c1 clone <i>ionanthus</i>			60
	S. 5h clone <i>rupicolus</i>			54
	S. 5b clone <i>confusa</i>			45
	S. 5b clone <i>grotei</i> Silvert			35
	S. 5c1 clone <i>tongwensis</i>			27
	S. 5c2 clone <i>diplotrichus</i> Parker			27
	S. 5a clone <i>grandifolius</i> No. 237			26
	S. 5b clone <i>confusa</i> Mather E			24
	S. 5h clone <i>rupicolus</i> Cha Simba			23
	S. 5c1 clone <i>tongwensis</i> Uppsala 3397			20
	S. 5f clone <i>orbicularis</i>			20

*MINTRS = Minatures

*TRLS = Trailers



And the Winners Are ...

By Mary Corondan

Email: winners@avsa.org

■ African Violet Club of Kansas City, MO — Winners:

• Best AVSA Standard Collection: Letnie Sumerki, Miss Lily, Bob Serbin; Best in Show/Best Standard: Letnie Sumerki; Best Semiminiature: Winnergreen; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Wilma Wolverton**.

• Best Trailer: 23-Reka Severka; Best Design, **Dale Cox**.

• Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* 'Moonlight', **Tricia Taylor**.

• Design Sweepstakes, **Helen Gieselman**.

Booster Donations

By Randy G. Deutsch

Donations received from November 1, 2021, through December 31, 2021 Total: \$1,360

Email: fundraising@avsa.org

Booster Donations support AVSA ongoing general expenses.

■ **\$500-\$599**

Jack and Pat Wilson, DeBary, FL

■ **\$100-\$199**

Susan Anderson, Phoenix, AZ

Jessica Arnold, Wildwood, MO

■ **\$50-\$99**

Jessica Arnold, Wildwood, MO

Kathy Bell, Tucson, AZ

Trudy Brekel, Denver, CO

Randy G Deutsch, Sioux Falls, SD

Janet Fox, Oakland, CA

Carolyn Myers, Broomfield, CO

Sue Ramser, Wichita Falls, TX

Joyce Stork, Henderson, NV

■ **\$25-\$49**

AVS of Syracuse, New York

Brian Hawkins, Henniker, NH

Heather Mulvihill, Chesterfield, VA

Sandi Soto, Tampa, FL

Gloria Vanderhorst, Chase, MD

Carolyn Walker, Southaven, MS

■ **Under \$25**

AVS of San Francisco, California

Martha Howe, Memphis, TN

Michelle Warner, Rockville, CT

Barbara Burde Endowment Fund

By Randy G. Deutsch

Donations received from November 1, 2021, through December 31, 2021 Total: \$100

Email: fundraising@avsa.org

The Barbara Burde Endowment Fund supports the Society's long-term needs in technology.

■ **\$50-\$99**

Kathy Bell, Tucson, AZ

■ **\$25-\$49**

Laura Campbell, Camarillo, CA

Linda Schuessler, Loudon, TN

Anne and Frank Tinari Endowment Fund

By Janet Riemer

Donations received from November 1, 2021, through December 31, 2021 Total: \$90

The Anne and Frank Tinari Endowment Fund supports the long-term stability of the Society.

■ **\$50-\$99**

Kathy Bell

■ **\$25-\$49**

Sue Ramser

In memory of Jim Owens' service to AVSA

■ **Under \$25**

Barbara Greenawalt

Jo Ann Levine

Correction from the January/February 2022 issue:

The donation to the Anne and Frank Tinari
Endowment Fund from the First AVS of Wichita
Falls in memory of Winston Goretsky's mum was

made by **Sue Ramser**, not the club. We apologize
for the error.

Boyce Edens Research Fund

By Randy G. Deutsch

Donations received from November 1, 2021, through December 31, 2021 Total: \$15

Email: fundraising@avsa.org

The Boyce Edens Research Fund supports research and scholarships.

■ **Under \$25**

Barbara Greenawalt, Glen Allen, VA

How to Set Up Your Growing Area

By Sandra Skalski

Email: publications@avsa.org

If you have more than a few violets, you've probably thought about where to grow and display your plants. The good news is that African violets can be grown in many different settings. Your challenge: finding the best place to keep them healthy and blooming while you enjoy them.

Location, Location, Location

Those are the three most important words in real estate and violet growing. While violets can thrive in many places in your home, results may vary. First, consider your priorities. Are you growing for show or pleasure or both? Do you want to see your plants on a daily basis — perhaps while sipping your morning coffee or when you return home after a long day at work? Will seeing your plants each day help you remember to water and groom them? Do you have pets or maybe tend an outside garden? If so, a location that minimizes exposure to outside pests will be important for you.

Let's start with some places to avoid.

- Near frequently opened doors or windows. Pests like thrips, aphids and mealy bugs can hitch a ride on a breeze. Screens won't stop these pests from getting to your indoor garden.
- In drafty areas.
- Too close to a windowpane. The temperature can be several degrees colder next to your windows in winter. You could see damaged leaves and even root rot from cold, moist soil.
- In scorching, direct sun, such as a southern exposure in the summer months.
- Where you display cut flowers or florist's bouquets. Pests won't mind the short flight to your violet collection. Outdoor gardens have checks and balances, so predator bugs will control pests. Your indoor garden doesn't have that advantage, so you need to protect your plants from infestation.

- Any place that doesn't have enough natural or artificial light.

If your growing area is out of sight, try to schedule time each week to spend with your plants. Consistency in care is the key to growing healthy violets.

How do you know if you've chosen the right location? Your plants will tell you. If pests are a frequent problem, consider moving your growing area to a more secure location. If they aren't blooming but are otherwise healthy, they may not be getting enough light. Windowsill growers can add some artificial light in winter using a small lamp with a fluorescent or LED bulb.

Keep Plants and Tools Handy

You are more likely to tend to your plants if they are handy. Consider setting up an attractive plant stand in your living or dining room. If your growing area is out of sight, try to schedule time each week to spend with your plants. Consistency in care is the key to growing healthy violets. I spend Thursday evenings in my basement plant room.

Keep even hidden growing areas neat and tidy. You'll enjoy your time there, which will encourage you to spend more time with your plants.

You are also more likely to tend to your plants if the needed tools are at your fingertips. Wherever you grow, have frequently used supplies handy. If your growing area is out of sight, you can store your fertilizer-water mix in old milk jugs. However, if you have your plants in your living room, you can use decorative containers. Perhaps a pretty vase can store tweezers and tools, while an attractive watering can will hold your fertilizer solution. Having things handy will help you get the job done when you have only a few minutes to tend to plants.

Store other necessary supplies, including pots and potting mix, where you can access them easily. Washing dirty pots is no fun, so give them a good soak well in advance so they will be clean when you need them.

Organized and clean supplies, like a tidy growing area, will make tending your plants more enjoyable. Repurpose common household items to help organize your supplies. Cut strips of yarn for wicks and store them in recycled deli containers. I store my soil mix, perlite and similar supplies in empty kitty litter tubs. My pots are stored on a shelf according to size. If you don't have that kind of space, try a plastic tub.

Keep a shoebox handy with other frequently used supplies such as tape, a permanent marker, plastic bags, labels, a magnifying glass and disposable gloves. There's no one way to organize supplies. Find out what works best for you and avoid the stress of searching for items when you'd rather be working with your plants.

Consider Your Plants' Arrangement

Once you have your growing location, you need to arrange your plants. Give each plant its own space. Overcrowded plants are more likely to develop fungal diseases. Leaves should not touch.

When you arrange plants under artificial lights, consider their specific light needs. Green-leaved plants and many variegated plants prefer a lot of

light and grow best in the center of the shelf. Plants with wavy foliage or girl leaves grow best toward the edge of the shelf. Minis can grow 6 to 10 inches from the lights, while standard plants need 10 to 15 inches.

Give each plant its own space. Overcrowded plants are more likely to develop fungal diseases.

I give my best-growing and favorite plants prime real estate and their favorite spot on the shelf. How do I know they are happy? The leaves of single-crown plants should grow in a flat rosette. Tight centers or leaves reaching for the light could mean either too much or not enough light.

The temperature on different shelves or locations may affect your plants. If variegated plants don't have enough green in the leaves, the temperature may be too cold. You can put them on a higher shelf or in a warmer spot. If variegated leaves turn all green, lowering the temperature can bring back the variegation.

On my artificial light stands, I group plants according to type (minis with minis, trailers with trailers, etc). These groups tend to have similar requirements such as light time, distance from the light and grooming needs. Timers turn the lights on and off. Use smart plugs if you want different shelves to have more or less light.

Are you enjoying your plants and keeping up with their care? If so, you may be tempted to add another shelf or a table full of plants. That's great, but as always, be sure you don't add so many that their care becomes a burden and not a joy.

Happy growing!



Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Frozen In Time

Hybridized by: Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses/Sorano
Standard



Photo credit: Natalia Grishina

***Sinningia speciosa*
'NG-Charodeika'**

Cyber Diamond Convention
Hybridized by: N. Grishina



Photo credit: Elena Korshunova

**EK-Serdtse-
Korolevstva**

Cyber Diamond Convention
Hybridized by: E. Korshunova
Standard

Rooting Hormones: Magic for Violets?

By Joyce Stork

Email: joycestork@avsa.org

The horticultural marketplace is full of products that seem to produce magical results, including various rooting hormones. The rooting hormone products are all based on auxins, which are primarily found in meristem tissue and influence plant growth (such as root development and phototropism). Rooting hormones are an important horticultural tool, especially for propagating plants that do not naturally develop adventitious roots.

Many years ago, Irene Fredette wrote about rooting hormones in her article “Read Label Before Feeding” (*African Violet Magazine*, May 1992). In the article, she listed the hormone products being sold at that time, including SUPERthrive, Hormex, Rootone, Dip ‘n Grow and Allegro. She reported that the active ingredients in those products were the auxins naphthaleneacetic acid (NAA) and indole-3-butyric acid (IBA) as well as some based on Vitamin B1 (thiamine).

Going forward 30 years, even more products are labeled as rooting hormones, with most listing IBA as the active ingredient. The concentration of IBA in these products ranges from less than 0.1% up to 20%. High percentage formulations are specifically designed for hard-to-root plants like hardwoods. Products with the lowest concentrations are formulated for herbaceous crops like African violets.

These brands would be considered appropriate for violet growers:

- Bonide Bontone II Rooting Powder (0.1% IBA)
- Garden Safe Brand TakeRoot (0.1% IBA)
- RootBoost Rooting Hormone (0.1% IBA)
- Hormodin 1 (0.1% IBA)
- Fertilon Root Stimulator (0.0004% IBA)

Many violet growers who have tried a rooting hormone product say they don't think added hormones are necessary. African violets reliably develop strong roots in less than a month without added hormone.

Rooting hormones do have an effect on the growth and rooting of violets, but they must be used correctly for this effect to be positive. Rooting hormones may produce very negative results when too much is applied.

Those growers who are the most enthusiastic about using rooting hormones on violets often report that “less is more.” For example, one grower I talked to years ago reported that he got excellent results using a clean artist's paintbrush to apply the hormone. He dipped the brush into the powder, knocked off the excess and then lightly brushed the cut end of the sucker, leaf or crown cutting — so lightly that he could not actually see the powder.



Left: Photo credit: Vicky Richard-Allen. Right: Photo credit: Diane Riley.

Vicki Richard-Allen, who I connected with on Facebook, repeated her grandmother's advice: "If you see the powder, you used too much!"

Many violet growers who have tried a rooting hormone product say they don't think added hormones are necessary. Plants like African violets reliably develop strong roots in less than a month (often in just a few days) without added hormone. For most growers, that will be fast enough and the benefit of adding rooting hormone will not be worth the cost or trouble.

Note these cautions when using rooting hormones:

- Dipping a cut stem into a bottle of hormone is not recommended because of contamination issues. It is much better to pour a small amount of hormone onto a piece of paper or small container for use, then discard whatever is left over.

- Avoid dipping the damp end of a leaf cutting into powdered hormone. The resulting clump of powder on the end of the stem is known to delay the development of roots.

- Do not use kitchen utensils (such as spoons) to handle hormone product. Keep it out of the reach of children and read the label before using.

A 2005 article in *Greenhouse Product News* titled "Rooting Hormones" by Christopher Cerveny and James Gibson explained the danger of overuse:

"Care should be taken with rooting hormones because over-application of some formulations can cause damage

to the cutting base. Formulations dissolved in alcohol are more prone to cause burn or dehydrate plant tissue. Auxin in excessive concentrations may result in inhibition of bud development, yellowing of leaves, leaf abscission, blackening of stems and even death of cuttings. It has also been reported that misapplication to leaves may result in curling or other distortion of plant growth."

Should African violet growers use rooting hormone as a regular part of their culture? For many experienced growers, the answer is no. Those who choose to use it should proceed with caution, knowing that overuse can do damage. The magic of rooting hormones lies in choosing a product designed for African violets (with a low concentration of IBA) and avoiding over-application.

Growing Tip

"My spa tub area, lighted by an east window, was rarely used. My *Streptocarpus* are now on a metal stand in that bathtub and are the happiest

plants ever! The foliage and blooms are beautiful and bring lovely color into the master bath area."
—Anne Nicholas

The History of African Violets in Germany

By Dr. Dimitrij Trofimov

Email: dimitrij.trofimov@uni-jena.de

Editor's note: A version of this article first appeared in the Almanac of African Violet and Gesneriad World Today published in Moscow in January 2022.

The history of African violets is directly connected with Germany and the German colonial era. In 1892, Baron Walter von Saint-Paul-Illaire collected the seeds of small plants with blue flowers in the Usambara Mountains in Tanzania and sent them to Hermann Wendland, head gardener of the Herrenhausen Garden/Berggarten in Hanover. In 1893, Wendland grew plants from those seeds and gave them the scientific name *Saintpaulia ionantha*. He presented African violets at the flower show in Ghent (Belgium), and in 1894, the seeds of African violets were sent throughout Europe and the United States. This began the spread of African violets around the world.

Thirty years later, in 1927, the cultivation of African violets aroused the interest of Hermann Holtkamp, who took over the Isselburg nursery founded in 1902 by his father-in-law. In the 1960s, the nursery moved to Haffen and his sons began managing branches in the United States and Zimbabwe. Cuttings are propagated in Zimbabwe and airlifted to the main company in Germany, then distributed to horticultural companies in Europe and around the world. Holtkamp is known all over the world for its unpretentious Optimara series of African violets, which have won more than 80 international awards.

After the 1990s, many Russian-speaking immigrants moved to Germany, and they brought their passion for African violets with them. Violet hybridizing in Russian-speaking countries began to develop in the 1960s thanks to hybridizers such

as Boris and Tatiana Makuni. So many people had a desire to take part of their native land with them, and interest in violets in Germany increased thanks to new interesting varieties.

The first successful attempt to unite African violet lovers in Germany was made by Galina Domnina, who organized a Russian- and German-language internet forum on violets.

The first successful attempt to unite African violet lovers was made by Galina Domnina, who organized a Russian- and German-language internet forum on violets. The forum was later managed by the collector Natalia Hermann, who gave me my first leaves. My personal passion for African violets was reawakened after moving to Germany in 2003. I found a miniature double violet in a flower shop, and soon I had a collection of miniature plants. Unfortunately, due to uneven watering, they died after a few years.

Ten years passed, and when I received a blue African violet as a gift, I realized what I was missing—not

just plants, but also communication with other growers. I switched to collecting micro violets, *Kohleria*, *Achimenes*, *Smithiantha*, *Sinningia* and *Petrocosmea*. In Germany, I found a lot of enthusiasts relatively quickly. Even among plant lovers who didn't speak Russian, there were serious collectors, as well as lovers with a few violets on the windowsill.

The first and, unfortunately, the last rather formal show of African violets was held in February 2013 at the Berggarten in Hanover. The exhibition was quite important because it took place on the 120th anniversary of when African violets were first grown in Germany and was at the botanical garden where the first seeds were planted. The management of the botanical garden showed indifference toward my personal request for future events, but it did not break my will to organize shows to promote African violets.

In 2018, I became a coordinating partner of the Society for Plant Collections (Netzwerks Pflanzensammlungen) and part of the German Ornamental Plant Gene Bank of the Federal Office of Plant Varieties. This helped me found the gesneriad group at the German Perennial Society (die Gesellschaft der Staudenfreunde e. V.) in the same year. This was not simple, but I was supported by the members of my group and the society's board.

As the group leader, I wanted to share my devotion to African violets and other gesneriads with the public. I got this opportunity on the 100th anniversary of the University of Hamburg with the support of the university, the German Perennial Society and Lindt Boutique Hamburg. On July 27 and 28, 2019, the first German gesneriad exhibition was held in the Botanical Garden of Hamburg. About 200 plants of various genera of the gesneriad family were presented by Sebastian Genz, Britta Dietze, Natalia Herman, Bernd Lohse and me.

As part of the exhibition, I also gave lectures and seminars on growing violets and organized subsequent reports in various gardening magazines in Germany. I am in talks with the Hamburg Botanic Garden about a second show of the gesneriads, which, in addition to exhibits of living plants,

will also include a comprehensive art exhibition.

Since 2018, I have been trying to present the African violet in a new modern light, shaking off its reputation as an old-fashioned plant from grandmothers' windowsills. During this time, I have published eight articles on gesneriads in German, Russian and American magazines, and the leading German horticultural journals have published two reports about me and my collection.

But African violets are still hard to find. With the exception of Holtkamp, hybrids do not appear in Germany because there is little demand for them. (You can also find several varieties by Jenner Miemietz of her 8E series.) So, I have collected all the available micro violets and decided to start hybridizing myself in order to expand my own collection. In 2017, I started my first crosses. From a dozen crosses with almost a thousand seedlings, I grew about twenty plants. Many did not meet my expectations, and now I have no more than ten seedlings to check. I was able to grow micro-miniatures with Clackamas foliage, which I continue to test. Despite the fact that hybridizing violets is painstaking and often thankless work, creating something new is always exciting.

I am a molecular geneticist interested in scientific work with African violets and other gesneriads. With the support of the Departments of Plant Systematics and Evolution at the University of Hamburg and Friedrich Schiller University of Jena, I am currently conducting molecular research on the genus *Petrocosmea*. The purpose of this work is to determine the species of popular *Petrocosmea* that have a "sp" or number instead of a specific name. In the greenhouses of the botanical garden, I am collecting these plants to protect the diversity of the gene pool.

Over the past several years, with the help of my friends, I have managed to change outdated concepts about African violets in Germany. Also, thanks to the leading growers mentioned above, anyone can buy cuttings of violets in Germany and try to grow these plants. Such conditions will only contribute to the further development of violet growing in Germany.



Family Portrait: *Primulina* 'Xuan's Party Dress'

By Mel Grice

Email: melsgrice@gmail.com

Primulina 'Xuan's Party Dress' was introduced in 2018 by botanists from the Guangxi Institute of Botany in Guilin, China. It was created by Shu Li, Yi-Gang Wei and Fang Wen. They crossed two *Primulina* species, *P. liboensis* with *P. rongangensis*, and selected the best cultivar to name and propagate vegetatively. Wen named the plant for his older sister, Xuan. He said that it reminded him of her party dress.

This hybrid produces eight to ten pale purple flowers per stem. It seems to be eager to bloom at

a very young age and blooms almost continuously, unlike many other *Primulinas*. It has attractive green foliage with silvery patterning in the veins, reflecting its heritage from the silver-veined form of *P. liboensis*. The leaves are even more succulent than an African violet's and break off easily, so don't try repositioning the foliage like you do an African violet.

This hybrid likes low light with no direct sunlight. Turning the plant frequently so it receives light



Photo by Karyn Cichocki

from different directions is the only way to make sure it grows symmetrically and does not lean toward one direction.

I always try to learn where and how a plant grows in nature so that I can try to duplicate the conditions it likes to grow in. The Guangxi region of southern China is the heart of an immense limestone terrain stretching across the Sino-Vietnamese border. *P. liboensis* and *P. rongangensis* grow naturally in cracks in limestone rocks with very little soil. Their offspring, *P. 'Xuan's Party Dress'*, has a very shallow root system that requires good aeration with consistent moisture. It does not tolerate overwatering. I add extra coarse perlite to the bottom of shallow pan pots so that the roots are not sitting in water. I have also been adding some limestone chips to the bottom of the pots because in China, these plants are found growing on limestone rocks. My soil mix includes Pro-Mix HP, Light Warrior by FoxFarm, coarse perlite, charcoal and some dried molasses. (You might find it necessary to add some dolomite lime to your soil mix if you can't find a source for limestone chips.)

Primulinas require less fertilizer than African violets, so I use even less fertilizer than I would for an African violet. I grow mine under two T-12 fluorescent tubes on the bottom shelf of my plant stands, where it is cooler. I have also had success with growing Primulinas in mostly natural light passing through sheer curtains and just a single tube fixture suspended about 3 feet above the plants.

Thanks to the joint efforts of botanists from the Gesneriad Conservation Center of China and members of The Gesneriad Society, *P. 'Xuan's Party Dress'* has made its way to hobbyists in North America. Several Chinese botanists usually attend The Gesneriad Society convention each year to exchange new species and hybrid plant material. I am sure you will see some outstanding specimen plants of new Chinese Primulina hybrids at the 2022 Gesneriad Society Convention show in Tacoma, Washington, this coming July.

P. 'Xuan's Party Dress' is definitely one gesneriad that everyone should have in their collection.



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AVSA is non-profit, educational organization dedicated to helping African violet enthusiasts enjoy these beautiful plants.

Willy Martinez: Master Grower Who Never Fertilizes

By Bill Chaney

Email: billchaney@ymail.com

One of the great things about the internet and social media is that we all get to meet (at least virtually) interesting people that we would not likely ever encounter otherwise. One such person for me is Willy Martinez. Martinez is a musician and a grower and a photographer of beautiful African violets who lives in Guatemala City, Guatemala. Those who follow any of the Facebook groups for African violets are most likely familiar with Martinez and his incredible photos of the amazing plants that he grows.

Martinez began growing unnamed violets when he was only around 8 or 9 years old. His neighbor had many violets, and he admired them so much that one day he asked her to give him one. Her gift left him wanting to have many more in many new colors, which led him to learning to propagate and cultivate them to perfection.



Guatemalan African violet grower and photographer Willy Martinez. All photos by Martinez.

It was several years later that Martinez found out about the registered, named African violets. Shortly after that, he began to buy his first named violets from Mexico. Now, nearly 28 years after he began to

grow violets, he has about 500 named varieties. Although he grows numerous types of violets, including ones with many different foliage and flower types, he has a special weakness for minis. If pressed, he lists his top five favorite African violets as Rob's Lucky Penny, N-Neytiri, SK-Vernisazh, N-Kapelka and Senk's Azalea Trail.



Rob's Lucky Penny

Two years ago, Martinez began growing under LED lights in a dedicated room. He maintains his growing room at about 60% relative humidity and at a temperature between 60 and 74 degrees F (16 to 23 degrees C). He grows in plastic pots and disposable cups. He uses spring water from a stream to water his plants and uses wick watering on everything except some sensitive minis, which he may top or bottom water.

While many of Martinez's cultural practices mirror those of good growers anywhere, one area that differs from any other major grower is the substrate in which Martinez grows his plants. He collects leaf compost from the forests of a mountain near his home that have a wide variety of deciduous trees (no pines, firs or other evergreens). He removes the

leaves that have not yet broken down from the top of the natural compost, then breaks the mixture into a fine texture with his hands. He mixes 75% of this compost with 25% natural soil (relatively sandy) from the same mountain and then sterilizes the mix.



The mountain where Martinez gathers soil and compost for his potting mix.

This may shock some of you, but Martinez does not fertilize his African violets. They receive all the needed nutrition from his planting mix. Martinez repots his violets as needed for cultural reasons, but his potting medium will feed his plants for up to 18 months!



Willy Martinez's potting mix.



Harmony's Little Stinker



Mac's Virtually Velvet



Rob's Calypso Beat

Martinez has a special gift, talent and maybe even an obsession to grow compact, symmetrical, aesthetic plants. He developed this talent from what he has learned from experience and the internet. He does not like to leave the flowers on his African

violets for too long because too many flowers ruin the symmetry. The plant becomes narrower and the leaves lengthen because the flowers do not allow enough light to reach the crown. Since different varieties take various amounts of time to produce new flowers, he allows each plant to flower for different periods.



Pearl Joy

In addition to growing beautiful African violets, Martinez takes amazing photos of his plants. He uses his Galaxy A71 phone and does not use Photoshop on his photos, as he wants the photos to be a real representation of his beautiful plants (the words you see on his Facebook photos are added with an app he has on his phone). He photographs his plants on an empty shelf using the same lighting he grows his plants under. A white ceramic tile provides a clean backdrop for his photos. For top-down photo, he places the plants on top of the white tile. For side photos, he puts it behind the plants vertically.

Martinez is a great example of an individual who has developed a unique cultural program that works for him in his situation. I feel fortunate to consider Martinez a friend, even if we never meet in person. I hope to enjoy his photos and posts on Facebook for years to come.



Ramblin Sunshine



Spring Cardinal



A circle of minis



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In Search of New Violets

By Dr. Jeff Smith

Email: jsmith4@bsu.edu

If you have never tried your hand at hybridizing, spring is an excellent time to experiment. The days are getting longer in the northern hemisphere and window-grown plants will often respond with more flowers. Spring weather often includes numerous showers that can raise the relative humidity of the growing area. The combination of increasing day length, warmth and higher humidity is ideal for successful pollination and seed set.

Remember that it will take several months for a seed pod to mature. Pollinations in the spring will produce mature seed by fall. Depending on the plant size, miniatures can produce blooming plants by the following spring. Standards will take a few months longer. Why not look over your plants this spring and try your hand at hybridizing!

Q: Is it possible for a flower to show the fantasy pattern in more than one color?

A: It is true that most fantasy flowers tend to show certain color patterns. One of the most common is blue/purple dots or dashes on a pink background. Another is to have white dots or dashes on a dark blue background. Occasionally you find red dots or dashes on a lighter-colored background. The fantasy marks are produced by genes for pigment production going on or off at different times. The normal pigment production pattern goes from white to pink to red to blue. Fantasy interrupts the pattern, and the different colors and background depend on where the pigment production stopped.

Each pattern in the fantasy is controlled by a separate gene. This means that the different colored patterns are the result of different fantasy genes. Most plants only have one of the fantasy genes, so the pattern of colors is the same throughout the

entire plant and in every flower (for example, pink and blue).

On very rare occasions, it is possible to inherit different fantasy genes in the same flower. This means that the interruptions to the pigment production pathways can happen in multiple places instead of just one. Where one fantasy gene flips the colors from pink to blue, a second can flip the colors between pink and red. Combine the two fantasy genes together and you can interrupt the colors at different locations. The result is a more complex type of fantasy flower with multiple patches of background colors and different dots or dashes of a new color. For example, some parts of the flower may have white or pink backgrounds with random dots of red or blue. The colors are more complex and mixed in flowers that contain more than one type of fantasy gene.

If your goal is to breed for these more complex fantasy patterns, choose parents that have different fantasy patterns. One parent might have a pink background with blue dots and another a white background with red dots. Assuming that each parent carries only one copy of their particular type of fantasy, about 25% of the offspring will have the combination of two fantasy genes and show the more complex fantasy pattern. The remaining offspring should be 25% solid, 25% fantasy from the seed parent and 25% fantasy from the pollen parent.

If either of the parents is homozygous dominant for fantasy, 100% of the offspring will carry fantasy from that parent. Should both parents be homozygous dominant for their type of fantasy,

100% of the offspring should have the mixture of the two fantasy patterns.

I'm speculating that most hybridizers have been using only one fantasy parent in their crosses. This is one reason why we have few plants with a mixture of fantasy types in the same plant. I'd encourage hybridizers to try crossing fantasy to fantasy and see what kinds of different offspring they can produce.

Q: I'm interested in producing plants with pink variegation in the leaves. Any suggestions for improving the chances for this outcome?

A: I'm assuming that you are talking about the Tommie Lou variegation type, where the edges of the leaves are white, cream or pink. Use a Tommie Lou-variegated plant as the seed parent. Find a pollen parent that has leaves with a dark red epidermis on the back of the leaves. The darker the red, the better. The seed parent should pass on the variegation to all the offspring. The red leaf-backed pollen parent will pass on the dominant trait for red leaf backing to the offspring. If the leaves are very dark red, the chances are good that the pollen parent is homozygous dominant for this trait and all of the F1 offspring will inherit the red leaf backing. Pink variegation is produced when the plants have the Tommie Lou variegation (inherited, in this case, from the seed parent) combined with the red leaf backing (inherited from the pollen parent). The result should be F1 plants with pink variegated leaves.

Please note that the depth of color on the red leaf backing is influenced by light intensity. You may find your F1 offspring have different shades of pink variegation depending on the light. Try growing them in different light conditions to find the combination that produces the most intense pink color. Crossing two of the best F1 plants together should produce some F2 plants with homozygous-dominant red leaf backing. The double dose of the gene may darken the color and produce even more intense pink variegation. Good luck.

Q: I am planning a cross using puff fantasy. My amount of growing space is limited.

Is there a reliable way to tell which seedlings might have the puff fantasy trait so I can select which seedlings to grow out?

A: Perhaps. Puff fantasy has been known to show in the foliage of the plant, especially if the leaves have the red leaf backing trait. If your cross includes the red leaf backing trait, try looking for seedlings that seem to have circles on the back of the foliage. Those seedlings are good candidates for carrying the puff fantasy trait. Any seedling with puff fantasy markings on the foliage should produce flowers with puff fantasy. The correlation between leaf markings and puff fantasy in the flowers may not work in every case, but if you have to select only a few seedlings to grow out, this might be a help.

Q: How important is the pH of the germinating media in starting African violet seed?

A: If you have a good growing media for your plants that is pH balanced, meaning that pH is not a negative factor in growing your plants, the same media should be fine for germinating your African violet seeds. The more important concern with the germinating media is to not have particles that are too large, which can bury or cover the small seeds. African violet seeds are very tiny and must be on the surface of the germinating media. They should not be covered up, as they don't have the energy reserves to push through the soil and into the light.

The seeds must also not be allowed to dry out, so a covered container that keeps humidity high around the seeds is important. Some growers have reported better success in germinating seed by bottom heating the germinating media slightly. In the days where ballasts were present in fluorescent lights, feeling the shelf for the warm spot under the shelf was a good way to provide the extra heat. Most growing spaces should be warm enough that extra heat is not really necessary, but it might be a consideration if your growing spaces are on the cool side. Remember not to fertilize the germinating media. The extra nutrients encourage too much algae growth and can smother your seedlings.

In summary, African violet seeds should grow just fine in the same soil conditions used for your larger plants.

Q: The article “Hybridizing for Beginners” in the January/February issue of the *African Violet Magazine* mentioned using plants with known fertility in your crosses. How do you know which plants are fertile? Is there a list somewhere?

A: I’m not aware of an actual list of plants with known fertility. There are over 10,000 cultivars and hybrids of African violets, so I’m sure that no one has checked the fertility of each and every plant.

The best I can suggest for finding fertile plants is to carefully check the reproduction parts of the flowers for normal structure. Some plants, such as doubles and the Optimara Looxo series of plants, don’t have functional stamens. Even if stamens and anthers are present, not all plants are male fertile and the pollen may not develop. Cut open the anthers or pollen sacs on plants that you are considering as pollen parents. If the inside of the yellow anthers is consistently mushy and wet, they are likely male infertile and can’t provide pollen. Plants that are male fertile will have anthers with dry, powdery pollen. These plants would make good choices for use as pollen parents.

Examine the pistils of your potential seed parent plants for normal structure. Flowers with double

petals may have converted the pistils to extra petals and are therefore female infertile. If the pistils are small, misshaped or otherwise abnormal in appearance, the plant may be female infertile.

Also check to see if the stigma at the tip of the pistil spreads slightly into a two-part structure as the flower ages. This is a sign of receptivity for pollen. There should also be a change in texture, with the stigma becoming slightly wet and sticky in appearance. If you can observe these changes as the flower ages, your odds of having a female fertile seed parent are greatly increased.

I would estimate that most African violet cultivars are fertile as either a pollen parent, seed parent or both. It might take a little trial and error to get a successful pollination, but careful examination of the anthers for pollen and the stigma for receptivity should greatly increase your chances of a successful cross.

Another tip is to make several crosses on different days on the same flower stalk. This may help you catch the pistils at the right stage of receptivity and result in several successful pollinations and seed pods. Multiple seed pods on the same flower stalk increases the odds of them surviving to maturity. The hormone signal from several seed pods decreases the chance for spontaneous and premature abortion of the developing seed pods.

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The Language of Plants

By Sharon Rosenzweig

Email: srosenzw100@comcast.net

Many times, I hear people say that they have no luck with houseplants or that they have a “brown thumb.” Growing plants has nothing to do with luck or the color of one’s thumb. It has to do with learning the language of plants and taking action.

All plants talk to you. They don’t utter words but demonstrate “body language” that tells you if they are happy or need a change in growing environment. You just have to learn the language, listen and act. Here are some ways African violets can tell you if they need you to change the way they are growing:

- Too dry:** Outer leaves are drooping but stems look healthy; top of the soil is dry.
- Too wet:** Leaves are drooping and stems look glassy and mushy; top of the soil is wet.
- Too cold:** Leaves bend down to hug the pot; leaf edges curl under.
- Too hot:** Plant is not growing; flowers do not open or are smaller than usual.
- Not enough light:** Leaves are reaching up to the light source; open, leggy growth; no blossoms.
- Too much light:** Leaves looked bleached or scorched; center is tight; plant is very compact.
- Needs to be rotated:** Plants grown in windows lean in the direction of light.
- Needs feeding:** Leaves are pale in color; slow growth; plant is not blooming.
- Too much feeding:** New center growth is very tight; leaves show brown or orange spots, indicating fertilizer burn; orange crust builds up on pots.

Once you know what is bothering your plants, it’s time to fix the problem(s).

Once you know what is bothering your plants, it’s time to fix the problem(s). People appreciate good listeners and so will your plants.

- Water issues:** Water plant thoroughly or let it dry out before watering again; check for root rot and remove any decaying roots; repot in fresh mix.
- Temperature issues:** Move plants to higher shelves if cold or lower shelves if hot; move plants away from drafts; turn on lights at night instead of daytime.
- Light issues:** Increase or decrease amount of time plants are under lights; move plants closer or farther away from lights.
- Lopsided plants:** Rotate one-quarter of a turn every few days.
- Fertilizer issues:** Feed with a balanced fertilizer every time you water (1/8 or 1/4 teaspoon fertilizer to a gallon of water); leach plants with plain water to remove fertilizer salts.

People appreciate good listeners and so will your plants.



Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Harbor Blue

Grown by: Richard Nicholas

Hybridized by: T. Weber

Large



Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Arctic Frost

Grown by: Donna Brining
Hybridized by: S. Sorano
Standard



Photo credit: Marina Totieva

MT-Izumrudnye-Kopi

Cyber Diamond Convention

Hybridized by: M. Totieva
Standard

Designs on Designing

By Winston J. Goretsky

Email: winston@goretsky.ca

Creating and exhibiting designs in an African violet show can sometimes feel like an overwhelming activity. This does not necessarily have to be the case. Below is some advice on how to create a winning design using your own ingenuity, observations from others' work and some useful tools

Creating Your First Design

A design begins as a theme or concept that must be interpreted by the designer and translated into an expression of that idea. Two of the categories in the design division of a show are Interpretive Flower Arrangements and Interpretive Plant Arrangements. (A category for Container Gardens is also available; however, that is a subject for an entirely separate article.)

The categories of designs in a typical show will state the rules and guidelines, which must be followed, as these designs will be created by various exhibitors. It is always good practice to read through the design categories and think upon them for a little while. Sometimes, a design theme will immediately evoke an inspirational idea. Use a notebook to write your thoughts down, as it's good to look back upon them later and refresh your memory.

Some design concepts are very specific and well stated, while others may be vague and loosely

described. A good show schedule will have design categories that guide your inspiration and don't confine or restrict it by stating too many specifications.

If you haven't already obtained a copy of the *AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges*,



Arch Bridge by B.J. Ohme. All photos by Winston J. Goretsky.



Covered Bridge by Mel Grice.



Indian Powwow by Ruth Goeke.



Fiesta by Ruth Goeke.

it's an excellent source of information to learn more about the rules and how exhibits are judged. Knowing how a design will be evaluated can provide good insight as to how a design could be created. This Handbook is available on the AVSA website and a new revision is scheduled to be released very soon.

Once you've had a chance to ponder your execution strategy, begin to gather the items or mechanics that will help you assemble your idea into reality. For example, depending on the rules in the show schedule, you may need a base or a container. You may have a color palette in mind, so you may need to spray paint your base to match your desired outcome.

Garage sales and second-hand stores are often an affordable place to find surprisingly useful items for design. A stroll along a beach might produce a piece of driftwood, polished glass, shell or other object that, in time, could be extremely valuable in a design. A small round mirror, crystal wine glass or miniature figurine could be just the item you seek for a concept that you are developing in your mind. Your family may think that you've become a hoarder, but assure them that you have plans on using them for specific purposes that you haven't yet discovered.

How will you be able to construct the "bones" or framework of your design? Will it be suitable for transportation to the show or will you have to construct it in place at the show? How much time will it take you to prepare your exhibit? These are some good questions that can help you in advance of the show. Rehearsing the construction and assembly of your design at home will give you confidence that it will turn out well and

help you understand what you need to do to repeat your design at the show.

Ensure that you make notes to remind yourself of the things that you'll need for your design so you can quickly gather items and have them available. All good plans, no matter how well laid out they may be, can run afoul at the last moment. This is when ingenuity and improvisation become your best friend.

Learn from Other Designers

When you attend a show, don't just casually walk past the designs. Spend a bit of time and study them individually. Look at how they are constructed, what materials are used and how they impact your reaction. What types and colors of background materials were used? How did the



Dollywood by Ruth Goeke.



Nashville by B.J. Ohme.



Rhythm by Linda Hall.



Autumn Leaves by Fran Russom.

exhibitor use the elements of design (color, form, line, pattern, space and texture) and manipulate them according to the principles of design (balance, contrast, dominance, proportion, rhythm and scale) to create beauty, harmony, expression and order? Who was the exhibitor? Take photos and make notes so that you can remind yourself what designs were effective and how they were constructed.

If you are able, speak with some of the exhibitors. Ask them specific questions about how they created their designs. Sharing knowledge and skills with others is sometimes the best learning experience and encouragement another individual can receive.

The images used throughout this article are of the Best Interpretive Flower Arrangements and Best Interpretive Plant Arrangements from the past eight AVSA Conventions (2012 to 2019). I hope they will inspire some ideas as well.

Put Together a Design Toolkit
Experienced designers usually have a collection of tools and treasures they find useful when creating their designs. For someone assembling a design toolkit for the first time, it might seem like there are a lot of items to gather. Don't try to put everything together all at once. You may find that you will never use some of the items. Being aware of what the items are and how to use them will help you decide if it's something that will come in handy for the types of designs that you might like to attempt. Over time, your design



The Rio Grande River by Judith Carter.



Sandia Peak Tramway by B.J. Ohme.



Miami's Parrot Jungle by Susan Anderson.



Fun in the Tropical Sun by Mel Grice.



Chain Stitch by Judy Zinni.



In a Nutshell by Anne Nicholas.

toolkit will be composed of the things you use most often. The other items can be picked up or borrowed when needed.



Hoop by B.J. Ohme.

The following list identifies some of the items that could be included in a design toolkit:

- Chopsticks
- Fishing line
- Floral adhesive waterproof tape
- Floral gum or sticky adhesive
- Floral picks (wired wood)
- Floral stem wire (paddle, precut)
- Floral tape (clear waterproof, green stem wrap, white stem wrap)
- Floral tubes or water picks
- Glue gun (cordless dual temp, high temp, low temp)
- Glue sticks (dual temp)
- Hairpin holders
- Ikebana kenzan pin frogs



Rodeo by Fran Russom.

- Knife (Exacto, fixed blade floral, folding floral)
- Measuring tape
- OASIS Bricks (fresh flower)
- Pins (assorted)
- Plastic straws
- Pliers (needle-nose, round-nose)
- Scissors (floral shears, micro-tip)
- Silicone baking paper
- Surgical gloves (nitrile, latex)
- Toothpicks
- Tweezers (long-handled, short-handled)
- Wire cutters

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Full to Complete and the Next Frontier

By Dr. Minh Bui

Email: minhbui82@hotmail.com

The light source with the best spectral composition remains the sun. With light being plants' primary food source, the sun would be synonymous with a buffet. It contains everything the plant wants or needs to utilize for photosynthesis and other biological functions. In addition to the full visible light spectrum (from blue to red), the sun's spectral composition also includes UV-C, far red (FR) and infrared (IR).

LED technology has come a long way. In its infancy, LEDs were cost prohibitive and thus, very few people grew with LED lights. Today, the LED market is saturated with systems that, although affordable, are riddled with lights completely inappropriate for plant culture. But there is a new class of true full-spectrum LEDs that has emerged that I believe may change the African violet market.

The last two decades of scientific research have yielded tremendous advances and comprehension of how different parts of the spectrum impact plant growth and development. Two regions of the spectrum that are rarely described in mainstream literature but were previously introduced in two issues of *African Violet Magazine* issues are UV and FR.

Last year, I discussed the impact of UVA lights on an Optimara Loyalty, which was selected from greenhouse/natural light culture, where it receives UV, FR and IR light. I prefer African violets with perfect foliage over one full with flowers, so I am biased toward blue light. UV lights is the X factor for growth. People often notice that after they take their plants out in spring, the plant puts on significant growth, which can be attributed to warm temperatures, high-blue light (also known as

UV-A) and UV-C, all of which have been documented to facilitate growth. Though I have introduced UV-A to a few of my light setups, I caution against its long-term use in the home, especially if one has pets or children. Studies have shown long-term exposure to UV-A lights (such as those used in tanning beds) can lead to skin cancer.

The use of FR in artificial lights for orchids is taking off full steam after Full Spectrum Plus Optimum Orchid LEDs from the Orchid Hobbyist was introduced, which four African violet growers tested last year. In my tests, I find certain hybrids take to FR addition well and produce extra blooms. However, there were a few that elicited the notable etiolated response, including hyper-extended leaf petioles. Other testers found FR also influenced the colors of the petals, which is something to keep in mind during classification.

The aforementioned light system was developed by plant people who comprehend the photosynthetic requirements and are up to date on the research of how UV/FR impacts plant development. These lights usher in a new generation of lights available to future growers: a transition from "full (visible) spectrum" to "complete (solar) spectrum" that may someday include both FR and UV-A.

The term full spectrum has been overused and often used inappropriately. I have seen pink/purple lights advertised as full spectrum, but they are far from it. My definition of full spectrum is full visible light spectrum, which includes the entire range from blue to red. Fluorescents have achieved full-spectrum status along with LED retrofits. Some LEDs also qualify if one examines their spectral diagrams.

There are two aspects of light I have discussed these last few years that will hopefully help one decide which lights are best for their setup.

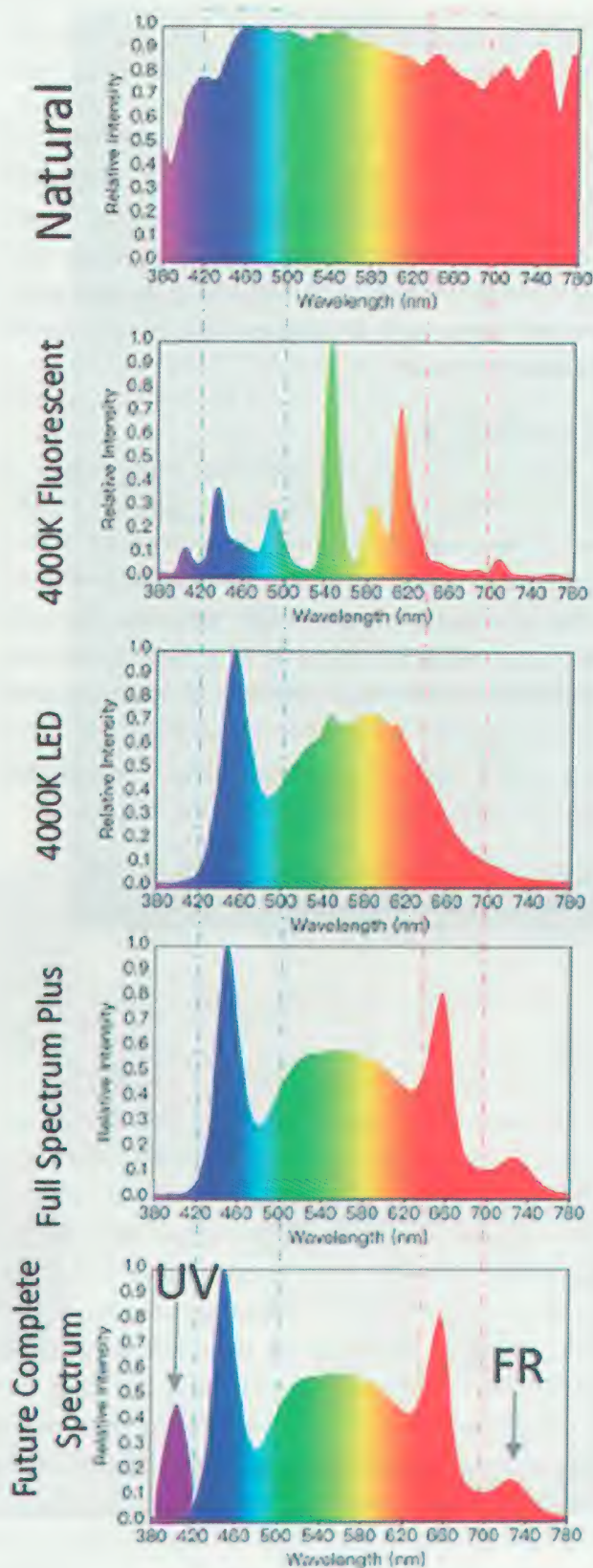
- Light quantity: measured and expressed as umols/lumens/lux/footcandles;
- Light quality: distribution and ratio of the blue/green/red, which can only be determined by examining the spectral diagrams with a spectrometer.

A term that has been underutilized is umols/m²/s, a standard of measurement for light intensity (or more appropriately PPFD) and determined by photosynthetically active radiation (PAR) meters (which measure intensity between the blue 400 to red 700 nanometer (nm) range). My scientifically aware critics point out that I should not be using or encouraging terms such as lumens or lux. My response is, which term does the plant prefer and which term does the lighting industry consistently use? For those adamant about the use of umols, there are websites and apps that can convert between umols, footcandles and lumens/lux. Because PAR meters are restricted to measurements within the 400-700 nm range, it discards UV and FR data that future light sources will incorporate, making its use restrictive.

This leads to the new frontier, particularly with hybridization. Current African violet hybrids are predominantly selected for their variegation and blooms under specific lighting systems the hybridizer adopts. Those who grow with natural light — which consists of UV, FR and IR — are probably better suited for African violets selected and adapted to that light system. Meanwhile, a hybridizer who grows and selects with warmer color temperatures (i.e., 3000K) will discover that others who grow with cooler daylight temperatures (i.e., 6500K) may slowly bleach and kill their plants over time.

As hybridizers diversify their releases to include standards, minis, semiminis and trailers, another missed opportunity is to provide growers with African violets that are selected and grow well with natural light — one of the largest untapped markets that does not grow for show.

Alternatively, a plant selected and grown under daylight systems will find that, its variegation is less pronounced and its symmetry is impacted under 3000K bulbs. Will lighting trends dictate which hybrids get released and which remain in circulation? The future remains bright.



Packing Show Plants for Travel by Plane and Car

By Dale Martens and Penny Smith-Kerker

Traveling to a show or convention with entries you've carefully grown for months or years can make you very anxious. Whether traveling by air or car, the goal is to reach your destination with your flowers unblemished and leaves undamaged. Here are some ideas for successfully moving plants between locations.

Get the Right Box

It's time to look for appropriately sized boxes. If you are flying, most airlines provide an under-seat storage space that will accommodate a box 9 x 14 x 22 inches, including handles and wheels. If you are flying on a smaller commuter plane, plan on limiting the box to 9 x 13 x 18 inches. Southwest Airlines has the most generous spaces for your plants: 10 x 16 x 24 inches. You must have some sort of handles (even homemade ones) to carry the box through the airport.

Penny prefers cardboard boxes for breathability. They should be well ventilated. Try using a drill to make several holes in them.

For car travel, Penny will often use custom-made boxes cut down from larger boxes so she can get them just the right size. A box that is 18 x 24 inches will fit two across in the width of her car and can also be stacked two high. You can also make your own boxes to better fit the dimensions of your car. For semiminiature and miniature plants, 8 inches is a good height. If the box has flaps, leave them in place so you can easily cover them as needed. It's best not to put the boxes where they will get blowing air from the air conditioner, but if you have to do that, make sure to cover them. Also, keep the plants away from direct sun light.

Dale slip-pots at home mostly because she's afraid she'll forget to bring the matching-size pots. That means she takes a pot the same size and color and covers the bottom of the show pot in plastic food wrap so that when it's watered, the show plant will not leak water on the show table. The show plant's pot goes into the empty pot.



A paper bowl turned upside down and cut with an X makes a perfect holder and keeps plants from tipping over. Tape it to the bottom of a larger box to help keep it in place. Photo credit: Penny Smith-Kerker.

Keep the Plants from Tipping Over

There are a couple of methods to prevent plants from falling over in their boxes. Here is Penny's suggestions for smaller plants:

- Get a paper bowl and cut an X in the bottom. Gently fold in the sides of X.
- Turn the bowl upside down and tape the edges of the bowl to the bottom of the box.
- Cover the bottom of the plant with a plastic bag. (She does not slip-pot until she gets to the show.)
- Push the plant through the X to secure it.
- Place the plants in the boxes one at a time so you can adjust placement depending on the size of the plant.
- Write relevant information, such as the plant name and show class number for entries, on the bowl/plant holder.

- For small plants, she does not place any additional support/packing material in the box.

Dale's technique is to use cereal or pizza boxes and cut holes the size of the pot. She uses a small piece of Scotch tape to tape the slip pot to the cereal box to prevent the pot from jumping out if the car hits a pothole or she needs to stop quickly.



Tape the cereal boxes to the larger box so they don't move around. Also, cut finger holes so it is easier to grasp the box. Photo credit: Dale Martens.

Next — and this is important — she tapes the cereal or pizza box to the bottom of the larger box. (It's possible to put multiple plants in a box, but make sure their leaves don't touch.) She also cuts horizontal holes in the big box in order to be able to grasp and hold the box when transporting it to the car.

Make sure to put a piece of non-skid shelf/drawer liner under the box so it doesn't slide around. If you are stacking boxes, use packing tape to tape the top box to the bottom box or it will slide off in transit.

When Diane Miller packs entries, she cuts holes in soft foam, slides the pots in the holes and places them in a plastic carrier. Don't cut the holes too deep because you don't want the leaves rubbing against the foam.



Diane Miller cuts holes in foam to hold her plants in place during transit. Photo credit: Diane Miller.

Caring for Plants at Convention

If your car trip is over six hours, the humidity inside the big boxes, particularly if you use plastic boxes, will be high. Therefore, when you arrive at the hotel, it is best to leave the plants in the boxes but open the tops of the boxes.

The second day, Dale moves a table or desk in front of the window and puts the plants on it. She uses the hotel's sheer curtains to protect the plants from direct sunlight. If you do this, write a note and instruct the hotel staff who cleans the room, "Please do not touch curtains." You can pin that message to the sheers with a plastic clip or clothespin from home.

Is all of this worth the hassle? Yes. You really feel like you're a part of the convention when you enter a horticulture exhibit. If you don't have a horticulture entry, consider reserving by May 9, 2022, to enter something in the Design Division.

One final note from Dale: "When driving to convention with a carload of entries, I always tell my husband the plants are not worth our lives. If we need to brake hard to prevent an accident, then brake hard. I can always share broken leaves with friends."



Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Yukako

Grown by: Rodney Barnett
Hybridized by: Unknown
Standard



Photo credit: Natalia Skorniakova

RM-Zolotoi-Barashek

Cyber Diamond Convention

Hybridized by: N. Skorniakova
Standard

Preview of the 2022 AVSA Convention

By Sophia Bennett

Email: editor@avsa.org

We hope to see many of you for the 2022 AVSA Convention in Little Rock, Arkansas, from May 29 to June 5. We know that for many of you, this will be a reunion as well as a chance to learn and show off your African violets. We are looking forward to making this a celebration as well as a safe, educational experience for everyone.

While the event formally kicks off with registration, information and various meetings on Sunday, May 29 (and Tuesday bring the first fun event — a guided tour of Hot Springs, Arkansas), convention activities begin in earnest on June 1.

Welcome Event on Wednesday

Wednesday happenings include this year's AVSA Judging School, classification and entries of plants and designs, and a "meet the Board of Directors" luncheon. The AVSA sales table, where you can pick up hot items such as convention shirts and the new *AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges*, will also be open for the first time that day.

In the evening, don't miss the opening ceremony, hosted by AVSA President Susan Anderson. A highlight is getting to see many African violet hybridizers' new introductions for the year. Stick around afterward for a welcome reception.

Thursday Highlights: Sales and Show

The convention show will be judged on Thursday morning. All of the winners will be announced at an awards banquet at 7 p.m. Following the banquet, the showroom will open for the first time to convention attendees only.

Rich Follett will host our first educational seminar, "It Followed Me Home. Now What?", on Thursday. Additional presentations will take place on Friday and Saturday. A complete schedule is on page 52.

If you come to conventions to add African violets to your collection, today is your day! The commercial sales room will open to convention registrants only at 1 p.m. Our vendors will have hundreds of beautiful plants to choose from.

Friday Fun Day

The showroom will open at 6 a.m. for photographers only. By 9 a.m., make sure you're lined up to enter the African violet showroom, as it will be open to convention attendees and the general public. This is your chance to see what makes an award-winning plant and an ideal design. Commercial sales will begin at the same time for those of you continuing your search for the perfect plant.

Anyone can be a winner at the Auction Luncheon. We expect to have a number of great prizes for both a silent and online auction.

The learning and fun continue with seminars, tours and more chances to shop. That evening, be sure to join us at Murry's Dinner Playhouse for an experience you won't soon forget.

Wrapping Up on Saturday

Saturday is the AVSA Annual Membership Meeting and Open Forum. This is your chance to vote on this year's Board of Directors nominees and amendments to the bylaws, hear more about what is happening with AVSA, and voice your questions and suggestions to AVSA's leadership.

In the evening, the newly-elected board members will be installed during a dinnertime ceremony that begins at 6 p.m. After that, it's time to pack up your new plants and get ready to head home.

More details on the convention are available on AVSA's website.



Come for Fun, Stay to Learn: Preview of 2022 Presentations

By Kathy Lahti

Email: convention@avsa.org

Here's a preview of the planned talks and the generous experts who are ready to share for this year's Little Rock convention.

It Followed Me Home. Now What?

Rich Follett

New to African violets? Curious? Returning to growing after some time away? Need a refresher? Whatever your reason for wanting to attend a basic African violet care and culture program, there is never a bad time to learn more or to refresh what you already know. Rich will offer up the basics of AV care, share resources and help find solutions to common problems. Goodies and giveaways, too!

Fun with Nature's Special Treasures: Trailers **Glenda Williams**

AV trailers have a more natural look, like plants grown in the wild. Some fill their containers with flawless beauty. Some give us that "bad hair day" look. Some are voracious bloomers, while others must be coaxed to share a single bloom. Trailers can be both fun and frustrating to grow. The joy of growing trailers is their unique ability to be forgiving. Do you have a favorite trailer? Join us for an overview of AV trailers, their unique growth habits, how to select an appropriate growing container and growing medium, fertilizer and amendments, lighting, humidity, grooming techniques and showing. Be sure to bring your questions for a brief Q&A at the end of the presentation!

Unleash Your Creativity and Find Your Passion for Design

Mary Husk

Everyone has creativity within. For some of us, it lies hidden, waiting to be unleashed. For others, it is present in everything around them. What is the

key to tapping into our creativity and expressing it? Why is it easy for designers to create winning designs show after show? And how can those of us who are hesitant to try our hand at designs find our creative gifts? The key is to open your imagination to possibilities in the abstract. This session will focus on basic design elements and simple ways to unleash your creativity and find your passion for design.

Everything You Wanted to Know About Sinningias!

Dale Martens

Dale Martens, one of AVSA's Bronze Medal recipients, will show lots of beautiful photos of micro, miniature and standard size sinningias. They're easy to grow! Learn about propagation and what to do with the tubers. Dale will share secrets to maximize blossom count. You'll also be treated to photos of her latest hybrids.

Renew, Review, and Reinvigorate Shows and Judges Committee

Mary Corondan Chair

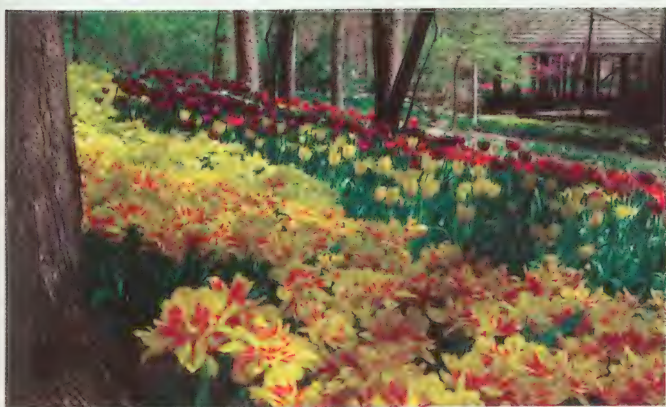
The Shows and Judges Committee is proud to announce the launch of the African Violet Society of America revised *Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges*. This presentation will provide a review of the newly revised Handbook. Highlights will be provided by members of the Shows and Judges Committee and other main contributors. You may want to bring your new Handbook along either in digital or hard copy format (both will be available at the AVSA Sales Table at convention). If times allows, a question-and-answer session will be held at the end of the presentation.

Go Hog Wild or Relax in Little Rock

Attending AVSA National Conventions and Shows gives you the opportunity to visit new, fun places on your own or on one of our organized tours. We expect Little Rock, Arkansas, will be one of your favorite trips. To be sure all attendees get the full Little Rock experience, the convention committee is offering a variety of tours, all run by a local professional company called Arkansas Destinations. All tours include transportation and professional tour guides.

Spa City Adventure

Be sure to arrive by Tuesday (May 31) for a full day of adventure and relaxation in Hot Springs, Arkansas. Your tour will take you to Garvan Woodland Gardens, the state's botanical gardens (where you can stroll the gardens or pay for a golf cart tour). Then you will head to the famous Bath House Row, where you can find a good lunch spot. In the afternoon, you will tour the Fordyce Bath House Museum and then have time to enjoy Bath House Row on your own.



Garvan Woodland Gardens features 19 gardens on more than 200 acres.

Plantation Country

Learn all about the South's cultural history as you tour the Marlsgate Plantation home and gardens

and enjoy an elegant sit-down luncheon. The tour, which runs Wednesday, June 1 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., gives you an insider look at the wedding gift of 1,100 acres presented to Nettie Steele in 1850 and restored in the 1980s. After the tour and lunch, the bus will stop at the Old Mill, a historic re-creation of an 1800s water-powered grist mill.

Little Rock Sightseeing

On Thursday morning (June 2 from 9 a.m. to noon), take in all that is historical, beautiful and fun with this tour of Little Rock. You'll see several popular Little Rock districts and sites and tour the Central High National Historic Site and the Clinton Library and Museum, where you can see a replica of the Oval Office and Cabinet Room. Then, sit and relax as the tour guide takes you through historic and popular districts.

Dinner and a Show

On Friday evening (June 3), head to one of Arkansas' most popular attractions — Murry's Dinner Playhouse. Enjoy dinner, the charm of the 1960s theater and have lots of laughs. You'll get to see "Menopause, the Musical" while you enjoy a delicious buffet dinner. The show is billed as a "hysterical musical parody set to classic tunes from the 60s, 70s and 80s." All you have to do is sit back, enjoy and laugh with your friends.

The tour company has created full-page flyers for each tour listing costs and all the features the tours include. Read more about each tour by linking from the AVSA Convention page to the helpful flyers.

Just add the tour to your registration on the same web pages. And be sure to make the most of your visit to Little Rock!

Advice for First-Time Convention Attendees

By Candace Baldwin

Email: auction@avsa.org

Are you ready for your first convention? After hearing about it from friends and seeing pictures of the amazing plants, designs and fun festivities in the *AVM* every year, you've decided to take the plunge and go. Congratulations! I know you'll have a good time and meet new friends.

If you haven't yet registered for the convention, you still can by downloading and completing the con-vention package available on the AVSA website. One of the questions you'll need to answer in the registration package is whether you want to enter any plants or designs in the show. I highly encourage you to do one or both. Participating in the show at the national convention is an amazing experience.

I know many people at their first convention shy away from the idea of showing, saying they just want to go and see what it's like before being an

exhibitor. I felt the same way and was more than a little intimidated at the thought of entering a plant at my first convention. I did it anyway and am so glad I did. Having a goal to have at least one entry gave me a reason to spend more time with my plants!

I will hold a first-time attendees meeting where I review the different aspects of the convention. I'll explain the different raffle tables and souvenir convention booklet, give insider tips for how to get the most from the convention and provide lots of time for you to meet other first timers and ask questions. Check for signs around the hallways and by the registration desk for the time and location. Until then, feel free to contact me with any questions.

See you in Little Rock!

Parking Information for Little Rock Convention

For those of you driving to the Little Rock convention, here is how parking will work. Parking is \$12 per car per exit per day. AVSA convention attendees will be able to receive a \$6 parking discount at the Convention District Parking Deck located at the corner of 2nd and Main Street. That means each time you exit the parking structure, it will cost you just \$6 instead of \$12. A map of this area is on the AVSA Convention website.

Before you exit the parking deck, you will need to make sure your ticket is stamped by AVSA or that you have picked up the stamped business card for discounted parking that will be available at the registration table. If you arrive when registration is not open, a sign at the registration desk will direct you to someone who has the stamped business cards.

Auction Time is Coming

By Candace Baldwin

Email: auction@avsa.org

Do you love the thrill of winning something and knowing you've donated to a worthy cause? Then this year's convention auction is for you. In addition to the always entertaining luncheon auction, we will be having an online auction again this year. Opportunities to win treasures will abound!

A successful auction begins with generous donations from our individual members, commercial members and clubs. The auction helps to raise funds for the general operating fund of AVSA, which supports our members and society in many ways.

If you are able to donate items for the luncheon auction, please bring them with you to the convention. If you can send a picture and description to auction@avsa.org ahead of time, I can post it

on the website to let people see what fun and interesting items will be available.

For the online auction, please send a picture and description of items to auction@avsa.org so they can also be posted on the website. Following the same process as last year during the cyber convention, online donations will need to include shipping charges from you to the winning bidder. Have a larger item to donate? Donors can request a minimum bid amount be placed on the item to cover the cost of shipping. If it doesn't reach the minimum bid, the item will not sell.

Please consider donating a violet-related item or anything rare, unique or unusual in nature. We'll acknowledge all donors on the convention website.

Let me proactively extend my sincere appreciation to those who donate and those who bid to win.

AVSA Convention Awards Update

By Vickie Crider Email: showawards@avsa.org

AVSA gives out numerous awards for plants entered in its convention every year. At the 2022 AVSA Convention in Little Rock, we have already secured more than 100 donations from individuals, clubs and councils. A complete list is available on the AVSA website, www.africanvioletsocietyofamerica.org.

Why not enter one or more plants in this year's show? The reward could be great! Also, if you are

looking for a way to give back to the society and help fellow members, why not make a donation? Please send your check or money order to:

AVSA Office, Awards

P.O. Box 22417
Beaumont, TX 77720

Donations can also be made online. Click on the Participate tab and choose Next Convention.



Photo credit: Pavel Enikeev

***Streptocarpus* 'DS-2437'**

Cyber Diamond Convention

Hybridized by: P. Enikeev



Photo credit: Tatiana Valkova

VaT-Dzhulia

Cyber Diamond Convention

Hybridized by: T. Valkova
Standard



Photo credit: Galina Lazarenko

LiK-Podsnezhka

Cyber Diamond Convention

Hybridized by: G. Lazarenko
Semiminiature

If I Could Only Have One African Violet

Compiled by Sophia Bennett

Email: editor@avsa.org

We asked African violet lovers, “If you could only have one African violet, what plant would you choose and why?” Here are their responses.

The one AV I would grow is **Cajun’s Code Blue**. It has lovely variegated leaves and beautiful color-dense blooms. Cajun’s violets are always easy to grow, strong and healthy. —*Gail S. Blank*

My favorite violet is **The Alps**. I love chimeras, and even though this plant isn’t outstanding in color, you can count on it to be in bloom and it grows symmetrically. You will usually always find it in a show because it is an easy grower. —*Trudy Brekel*



The Alps. All photos by Winston J. Goretsky.

If I were to choose just one African violet to grow, it would most certainly be **Hunter’s Kashmir**. I’m a standard violet grower, so I like the big ones. Not all violets grow well in all climates, but Hunter’s Kashmir grows well for everyone it seems, and certainly does extremely well for me. It grows large and blooms heavily without much effort. The frilled lavender/purple blooms and variegated foliage are a gorgeous combination. A show stopper for sure! —*Karen Buchanan*

Frozen In Time hasn’t stopped blooming in nearly two years and the foliage is pretty. It’s my least fussy, most interesting plant. —*Corey Dina*

If I could grow only one AV, hands down it would be **Anastasia**. This is a large standard that is literally never out of flower! The periwinkle-colored flowers are lovely and held above the foliage with multiple flowers per stalk, making the flowers almost cover the plant. They are sticktight (non-dropping). Plus, it has large red-reverse leaves that grow into a nice rosette form. It is a super easy grower for me. I have never had any issues with root rot or periods of non-flowering on this variety. It is very forgiving — unlike most of my other varieties, it doesn’t sulk if I don’t repot as often as I should or if I am not as careful with watering. —*Donna Fagen*

If I only had one plant to keep, I would choose **Harbor Blue**. This plant has very large blue flowers that last for over a month on my plant stand. This plant grows very nicely in a round circle for me. I like the way the petioles hold the flowers up over the dark green leaves. The contrast between the flowers and leaves is very pleasing. This plant has been a reliable one in my collection for many years, so I count it as a very hardy and dependable plant to bring to a show. —*Barbara Greenawalt*

If I could only have one African violet, I would probably choose **Melodie Kimi**. This variety grows well in the window or under lights and never stops blooming. My original plant came from the grocery store years ago when I lived in Louisville, Kentucky. The high contrast of dark purple and white attracted me. I gave leaves to my mom and sisters. We nicknamed it “the blooming idiot.” Several other plants look like it now: Rhapsodie

Lucia and Ultra Violet Twinkle, but I have fond memories of this plant. I was happy to see that AVSA chose it as the cover photo for its website. — *Sue Hoffmann*

My plant would be **Ness' Mini Sota**. It grows very symmetrically. It's a chimera, shapes up nice for shows, blooms heavy, is registered and propagates very easily by blossom stems. — *Kathy Lahti*



Ness' Mini Sota

Chanticleer because it's a true ever bloomer. — *Lynn Larkin*

My be-all, end-all favorite is **Arctic Frost**. I love this violet because it is always changing. Sometimes it is exactly as it is supposed to be (semi-double large white star/variable blue marked eye, etc.) and the next one — from the same mother leaf — might be a frilly all white, while another comes out as a chimera. Others will show various streaks of blue on the white blossom. Its variations are as many as the plant produces, and the size of the blooms can be anywhere from a quarter to a silver dollar! This is hands down my favorite. — *Marion Martin*

My all-time favorite African violet is **Beginner's Luck**. It consistently performs for me in my growing conditions. In the past, it has been one of my blue-ribbon show winners. It was one of the first violets in my collection. — *Sue Ramser*

Yukako. When I first seriously got into African violets, it was really just becoming available to the U.S. market and was far out of my price range.

It's the violet bloom that has both my favorite colors. My great-grandmother, an AVSA judge back in the 1950s and 60s, would have gone nuts over it. I finally got one in 2020 but had to give it to my mom to care for as, I moved to Scotland. — *Sam Rose*

Saintpaulia ionantha because it was the first one discovered. — *Karen Romoser*

Jolly Sunburst. It was my first African violet ever. It is the rare yellow (and quite a vibrant yellow at that). It survived me as a beginner, which says a lot about Pittman's hybridizing. It is such a forgiving plant and blooms frequently despite maybe not receiving perfect care. — *Angela Smith*

Tomahawk. It was one of my late husband's best-known hybrids, is a wonderful shade of red and brings back so many memories. — *Joyce Stork*

Concord (chimera). The single petal and distinctive color combination of the bloom is perfect. You could see it immediately from afar. Even non-violet people are drawn in by its uniqueness. The plant itself may not have show-perfect characteristics, but to me, everything about it, including the blossom, personifies zen. — *Elizabeth Tan*



Concord

Ma's Jamaican Farewell because it's a pretty plant when it isn't blooming and knock-out gorgeous when it is blooming. — *Dawn Wozney*



AV Creative Corner

By Rich Follett

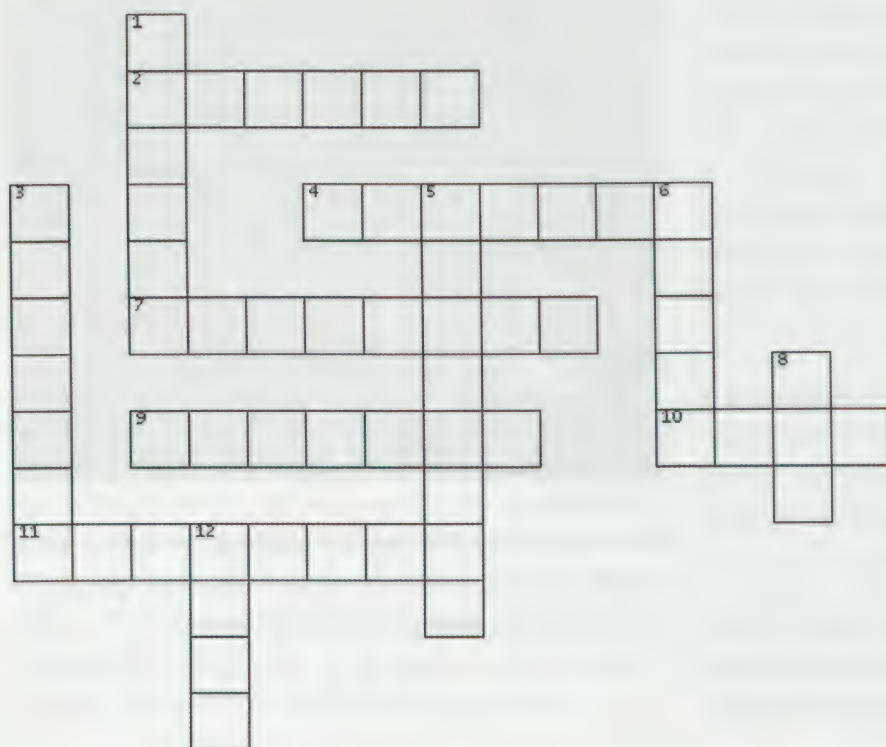
Email: avcreativecorner@gmail.com

Crossword Puzzle — HAVE a Go!

Although the crossword puzzle is America's most popular word game, it has a relatively short history. African violets and the crossword puzzle have been in America for just about the same number of years! Crossword puzzles debuted in England in the 19th century but did not appear in print until the New York World published one by journalist Arthur Wynne as a Sunday feature.

The earliest crossword puzzles were designed completely by hand. These days, we are lucky to have computer technology to assist. To make a crossword puzzle of your own, visit: <https://puzzle-maker.discoveryeducation.com/criss-cross>.

Have fun completing this crossword puzzle, submitted by Vicky Richard-Allen from Florida. Thanks, Vicky! Answers will be published in the next issue of *AVM*.



ACROSS

2. A variety that exhibits a combination of characteristics from two different parent plants
4. Hardened layer of surface soil sometimes caused by top-watering that can impede the proper distribution of water through the soil
7. The most common plant size for single-crowned varieties
9. Type of volcanic glass commonly used to create air space in potting mix
10. An organic pesticide also called Azadirachtin that is used to control insects
11. pH above 7.0

DOWN

1. Common insect known to feed on pollen and cause severe damage to the plant
3. Spontaneous mutation that creates a distinctive bloom pattern called pinwheel
5. Small baby plant that emerges from a leaf cutting
6. The pigment color of plant tissue that absorbs light during photosynthesis
8. The color of the light spectrum that is required for the production of blooms
12. The abbreviation for the organization that publishes the Master Variety List of African violets

If you have an idea or contribution for a future AV Creative Corner column, please email me at avcreativecorner@gmail.com.

AV Haiku from AVSA Members

By Rich Follett

Email: avcreativecorner@gmail.com

I never imagined that the AV haiku challenge in the first AV Creative Corner column would bring

From Pam Pavlick:

*I take joy today
Growing lovely violets
To share with my friends*

From Vicky Richard-Allen:

*It is hard to find
A way to control yourself
From buying them all*

*The moment that I
See the leaf babies pop up
I am filled with joy*

*Large, small or mini
Pretty leaves and blooms alike
Hard to choose just one*

From John Schutt:

*Softly delicate
Expressions of Creation
Touch eye and heart*

From Tede Fleming:

*True and loyal friends,
Only ask for love and care,
Reward? Blooms and cheer.*

From Suellen Fast:

*Shimmer, shines my glee.
Lacy lashes glimmer, blink:
Violet kissed me.*

so many wonderful responses! Thank you to our members for their marvelous creations.

From Natalia Bobrova, Moscow, Editor of the "Russian AVM" (*Uzambarskaya fialka*):

*Forgotten rosette!
My mouth became so dry
Immediately.*

*White petals are falling...
What a pitiful sight for me:
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From Camille Werther:

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My thoughts are undone*

*Pink explosion
Atop white crinkly petals
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*I am sorry, plant —
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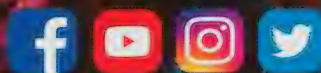


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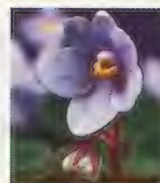
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African Violet MAGAZINE

Volume 75 Number 3

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African Violet Society of America

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Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.



President's Message

By Susan Anderson

Email: president@avsa.org

As I flip the calendar to May, I am ecstatic to see "AVSA Convention" scrawled in purple pen across the last week. It is nearly time! The national convention will showcase African violets that are grown by members from all over, packaged with care and brought to show. It will also feature a sales room, which will have plants from our commercial members, as well as educational presentations, tours around the host city and much, much more. Every violet enthusiast should experience a convention at least once. Thank you to our devoted team of volunteers who have made this convention possible. It is sure to be one to remember. I hope to see you there.

Show Entries Program Update

Many of our affiliate clubs have held spring shows and sales. What a thrill it is to see these events return with success. I applaud your accomplishments! For Show Chairs, this *AVM* contains an announcement regarding a forthcoming update to the AVSA Show Entries Program (see page 10). The update streamlines the reporting process by add-ing a function to directly submit final show results to AVSA, specifically the "And the Winners Are ..." and "Tally Time" reports. A huge thanks to the entire team that assisted with developing and testing this new feature.

New Handbook

The Shows and Judges Committee has been very hard at work completing a new version of the *AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges*. The new version, complete with beautiful illustrations, will be released at the Little Rock convention. You will also be able to order one from the AVSA Store on the website. You will want to have a copy of this reference in your library.

Convention week is also National African Violet Week. Celebrate by posting your favorite pictures of African violets on social media and sharing them with AVSA.

Thanks to Donors and Legacy Society

AVSA is grateful for our generous donors who give to our designated funds and endowments. Learn more about these on the Donate page of the website. The Tinari Endowment Fund was established to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of AVSA. Members who donate \$1,000 or more are admitted to the AVSA Legacy Society. Members of the Legacy Society will be promoting this opportunity during convention.

National African Violet Week

Convention week (May 28 to June 5) is also National African Violet Week. Celebrate by posting your favorite pictures of African violets on social media and sharing them with AVSA. Your plant may be featured as AVSA's Violet of the Day or highlighted on AVSA's Pinterest or Instagram pages.



Editor's Notes

By Sophia Bennett

Email: editor@avsa.org

It's been gratifying to see the first entries in the Article Contest arriving in my inbox. Please enjoy the submissions by Sharon Rosenzweig, Karyn Cichocki, Peg Crawford and Jennifer Vincent. I hope they'll inspire you to write an article of your own. Please see the next page for an update on prizes for contest winners. As a reminder, we're now accepting Growing Tips to run when we have extra white space to fill in the magazine. If you have a tip to share but aren't able to turn it into an entire article, this provides you an opportunity to be recognized for your good idea.

It was also a joy to get a sneak preview of the winner of AVSA's Dress Like Your Plant contest. See our winner and the other entrants on page 6.

This spring, I noticed several of my African violets had small clusters of leaves growing not in the crown. Although I was able to identify them as suckers, I wasn't positive what to do with them. That led me to a wonderful article by Nancy Manozzi from a previous issue of *AVM*. Enjoy it (and my brief update) on page 42. Those of you who are more advanced in your African violet practice are sure to enjoy Dr. Jeff Smith's usual column on hybridizing, which is on page 16 of this issue.

Are you planning to travel this summer? My trips will be mostly limited to ones planned for 2020 and disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. But if you're looking for a new adventure, why not visit some of AVSA's Commercial Members? Several of them welcome visitors as long as you make an appointment. Kathy Bell was kind enough to share the commercial member directory with us so we could pass on a comprehensive list to you (page 38). A huge thank you to Richard Craft, who helped me update the list. We also

highlighted one of these members — Moonlight Nursery — a few pages later.

If you have a tip to share but aren't able to turn it into an entire article, submit a Growing Tip.

When I'm not working on *AVM* or tending my meager collection of African violets, I enjoy quilting, making cards and other crafty activities. I came to these hobbies thanks to my mom, who is an incredible seamstress and also does a lot of crochet and needle crafts. She was the one who suggested an article on crocheted African violets, which you will find on page 60. I suspect many of you also have a fondness for crochet, so I hope this article will inspire you to pull out your hooks and yarn.

Every day, my heart goes out to our African violet friends involved in conflicts around the world. This issue of *AVM* features several photographs with 2021 introductions from Ukrainian hybridizers. We also included some pictures from the 2019 AVSA Convention in Houston. For those of you (like me) who have never been to a convention, I thought it might be helpful to see what it's like. Those smiling faces and gorgeous plants are getting me even more excited to travel to Little Rock and find out what happens when "African Violets Go Hog Wild." See you soon.

African Violet Magazine Article Contest

By Sophia Bennett

Email: editor@avsa.org

AVSA and its Publications Committee are re-opening the Article Contest to generate new content for *African Violet Magazine*. The contest will bring interesting new insights and ideas to African violet lovers — and is offering prizes to six lucky winners.

The Article Contest will accept submissions between March 1 and December 31, 2022. Anyone is welcome to send one or more articles relevant to growing, showing or hybridizing African violets. Entries will be accepted in two categories:

- Beginner/intermediate: articles designed to offer more basic tips; and
- Advanced: pieces with a more scientific take on topics.

Articles should be between 500 and 2,000 words. Please include pictures or illustrations if possible. Photos and other artwork must be high resolution (at least 300 dpi).

All submissions will be edited as needed. Edits will be discussed with the writer, and authors will have a chance to review articles before they are published. We strongly encourage even beginning writers or people who don't consider themselves strong writers to submit articles. If you have good information to share, we are happy to help you craft a piece that you are proud of. Articles will be judged on the quality of the finished piece, not the initial submission.

Keep in mind that *AVM* strives to provide African violet enthusiasts with information-rich stories they can use as they are growing and showing plants and designs. Articles filled with practical

advice and tips will fare better in the contest than personal stories about one person's passion or connection to African violets.

Articles will run in *AVM* beginning with the May/June 2022 issue. While we will endeavor to run all articles in 2022, some may be pushed into early 2023 if there are enough submissions. AVSA reserves the right to not publish any articles it deems unfit for the magazine. Writers must sign a waiver declaring that their work is original. Please cite sources when appropriate.

A panel of five judges will review the articles and pick a first-, second- and third-place winner in each category. Pieces will be judged on considerations such as the quality of the information shared, enjoyable and relatable storytelling, and suitability of the story for the publication. A complete rubric describing the judging criteria is available on the AVSA website. Contest winners will be announced at the 2023 AVSA Convention and in the July/August 2023 issue of *AVM*.

Here are this year's prizes:

- First place: Early/first entry into the sales room at convention OR a one-year AVSA membership for you to gift to a non-member.
- Second place: A gift certificate to Black Oak Violets.
- Third place: Donated African violet memorabilia.

Submissions and questions about the 2022 Article Contest should be emailed to *AVM* Editor Sophia Bennett at editor@avsa.org or mailed to the AVSA office.

AVSA Dress Like Your Plant Contest Announces Winners

By Sophia Bennett

Email: editor@avsa.org

Congratulations to Jamie Hart of League City, Texas, who is the winner of this year's Dress Like Your Plant Contest. Hart is wearing *Streptocarpus* 'Bikini Summer' and S. 'Geronimo' on her head. She will receive an original African violet print created by Dianne Duggan as her prize.



Many thanks to all of our entrants, who can be viewed at right and on the next page, and to Joyce Stork for organizing the contest. And a big thank you to the 377 AVSA members who voted.

Runners Up:



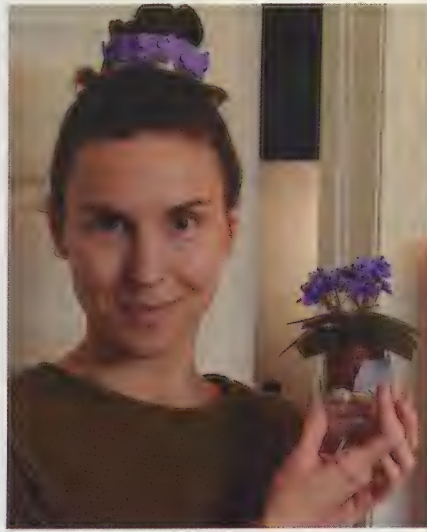
Vicky Richard, Plant: Senk's Alchemy Parakeet (trailer).



Vicky Richard, Plant: Taffylicious.



Tiffany Fincher, Plant: LE-Karusel.



L to R: Emily Gilpin, Plant: Cherub Cheeks; Emilie Harvey, Plant: Rob's Jitterbug; Jeff Smith, Plant (l): *S. ionanthus* subspecies *grotei* cl. *grotei* Silvert, Plant (r): *S. ionanthus* subspecies *grotei* cl. *grotei* sport.



Adrienne "Annie" Rieck, Plant: *S. 5h* clone *rupicolus*.



Shows and Judges

By Mary Corondan

Email: judges@avsa.org

The moment we have been waiting for has finally arrived! The new, revised African Violet Society of America *Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges* can now be ordered from the AVSA Office. Simply log in to the AVSA website and go to the AVSA Store to order your copy in your choice of formats (either a PDF or hard copy).

Judging schools are beginning to happen again. Teachers may use either the 2016 or 2022 edition of the Handbook for schools conducted between June 12 and December 31, 2022. Beginning on January 1, 2023, all schools are required to use the 2022 edition of the Handbook.

Although most of the minimal changes in the Handbook will not be announced until the convention, there is one change that Senior Judges must take note of immediately. Beginning in 2022, to become a Master Judge, the AVSA member must have served as a Senior Judge for a minimum of 12 years rather than the 15 years that was previously required. This means they must take a minimum of six Senior Judges exams rather than seven.

The Shows and Judges Committee will be meeting at the convention to discuss renewals for expired judging certificates. At this time, judges with expiration dates of 2020 through 2022 have been extended indefinitely. Remember to read the

Shows and Judges column in the *AVM* to stay up to date on new developments.

Beginning in 2022, to become a Master Judge, the AVSA member must have served as a Senior Judge for a minimum of 12 years rather than 15 years.

The committee has received questions about whether Hydro Pots are permissible in an AVSA show. These pots are similar to Oyama pots but have a black inner basket and a white outer pot that serves as a reservoir. The Shows and Judges Committee has determined that Hydro Pots are acceptable for AVSA shows.

Growing Tip

“Comfortable shoes, a playlist of favorite tunes and podcasts, plus a tall, covered glass of ice water are my potting room essentials. If I am

not feeling up to it, the job of potting is too easy to put off. Having my essentials helps me get motivated and get the job done.” —Jill Jensen

2022 Best Varieties Voting is Now Open

By Trudy Brekel

Email: bestvariety@avsa.org

Every year, AVSA publishes a Best Varieties List that helps growers learn about African violet varieties that are easy and enjoyable to grow. The list includes 25 plants that members have selected as their favorites through a vote.

It's now that time of the year when you are able to vote for your favorite African violets. All nominations submitted by June 30, 2022 will be included in this year's report. The Best Varieties List will be published in the November/December issue of *African Violet Magazine*.

You can vote online at www.africanvioletsocietyofamerica.org. Log in as a member and choose Member Content from the list on the left side of

the screen. Select Best Varieties Submission and choose Best Varieties Online Submission. Enter up to five different varieties, along with your name, and click on the Submit button.

You also have the option of printing the form, filling it out and mailing or emailing it. Forms can be mailed or emailed to:

Trudy Brekel
5553 W. Prentice Circle
Littleton, CO 80123
bestvariety@avsa.org

The AVSA Best Varieties List for 2022 won't be complete without your vote. Thank you for participating.

Support AVSA when you shop!



Did you know that Amazon has a program for shoppers to designate a charity of their choice, and Amazon will contribute a portion of every dollar you spend? Here's an easy way to support the African Violet Society of America at NO EXTRA COST TO YOU!

Just go to smile.amazon.com and follow the directions.

Select African Violet Society of America as your organization to support.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Updated AVSA Show Entries Program Coming

By Candace Baldwin

Email: website@avsa.org

African violet shows take a lot of time and effort to organize. They are often a labor of love by those who put them on. After the show is over, the Show Chair should complete a form to submit the winning plants and exhibitors to the *AVM* column "And the Winners Are ...". After all that effort, winners deserve to be recognized. Show Chairs are also supposed to send show information to Tally Time, the once-a-year compilation that provides top show plants by region across the U.S.

Yet, after all the work that goes into a show, Show Chairs are typically ready for a break. They have every intention of getting back to fill out that form, but days, weeks and then months slip by and it's forgotten.

Currently, these two processes are manual and labor intensive. That's about to change. The AVSA Show Entries Program is being modified to allow Show Chairs to send the information for these two columns electronically with a few clicks from inside the program.

While we are making these changes, it's the perfect time to standardize the AVSA special show awards. These special awards are currently manually entered by each club, so the naming structure varies tremendously. Moving forward, we will use a standard list of special awards as shown below. (For clubs who have locally defined designated awards, not to worry. There will be a place for these awards to be entered.)

Best in Show

2nd Best in Show

Best AVSA Standard Collection

2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection

Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection

2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection

Best AVSA Species Collection

2nd Best AVSA Species Collection

Best Standard

Best Semiminiature

Best Miniature

Best Trailer

Best Species

Best Gesneriad

Best Design

Horticulture Sweepstakes

Design Sweepstakes

Moving forward, we will use a standard list for AVSA special show awards. There will also be a place for clubs to enter locally defined designated awards.

Our target is to have the upgrade available by the time you read this article. Valid AVSA Show Entries Program owners will need to complete an online registration form. Once you have registered, you will receive an email with instructions and a coupon code. The code will allow you to get the upgrade for free, but act quickly, as the coupon will only be good for a limited time.

More information will be posted on the AVSA website under News.



AVSA Affiliate Update

By Jeri Anderson

Email: affiliate@avsa.org

May is convention time for AVSA and there are lots of activities. But another thing that happens in May is that clubs begin shutting down for the summer. Groups that have their spring show and sale and pick up a few new members, only to shut down soon after for the summer, run the risk of losing those new members before fall. If you keep meeting through the summer, you have a better chance of keeping those new members. Keep your summer meetings casual, with no club business so vacationers don't miss out on club news. The meetings can be a field trip to a botanical garden or a nice nursery. Just get together for lunch or some violet activity like a leaf exchange.

Fun little "did you know" topic: On the Violets 101 page of the AVSA website, there is the option to "Ask an Expert." From the Home page, place your cursor on the Learn button, then select Violets 101 from the drop-down menu. Click on the question mark at the top of the Frequently Asked Questions page to input your question.

If you have an interesting or fun program to share, please send it to Cristy Boothe at cristybooth@hotma.com. We hope to soon have a place on our AVSA website to post these programs.

Welcome new clubs!

- **Blooming Violets of Marion County** of Florida
- **Heart of Texas African Violet Society** of Texas
- **Acadiana African Violet Society** of Louisiana

Member(s) working to start a club:

- Jennie Lawrence: Laramie, WY; Email: missjennae@yahoo.com (Jennie also has a Facebook Group started called African Violets in the Wyoming Area)

Reach out to her if you are interested in joining.

There are several states that do not have even one African violet club. If you live in one of these states, please consider starting a local club. The AVSA website now has all of the information you need to start a new club. From the Home page, click on the Participate button and select the Find an Affiliate Club option. You will now see the Guide to Start a Club box at the top of the screen.

If you wish to have your potential club listed in the AVSA Affiliate Update articles, please send your information to affiliate@avsa.org.

Violet Preservation Committee Update

By Mary Thompson Email: preservingviolet@avsa.org

The Violet Preservation Committee's Most Wanted program matches people who are looking for a vintage violet with someone who has the violet. Here are the violets people are currently

seeking. For a full list of wanted violets, check out the AVSA website.

Masked Man

Optimara Crater Lake

Mauna Loa

Tipt

Why I Love My Job — and being an AVSA Commercial Member

By Glenda Williams

Email: secondvp@avsa.org

People sometimes ask me how I got into the African violet business and what I enjoy about it. With Glenda's House of Violets (GHV), I have finally found a great job that I truly love. Running my small business is made easier and more enjoyable thanks to our AVSA Commercial Membership, which I would like to encourage other businesses to consider.

How did GHV come about? In 2016, my husband Jim and I retired from full-time careers in the information technology industry. We started providing growing supplies at our local AVSA affiliate events, but only as a hobby.



Jim and Glenda Williams. Jim enjoys surprising visitors at shows and conventions by wearing costumes at the GHV booth.

In January 2017, we received a call about the passing of John Cook of Cape Cod Violetry fame.

Everyone knew and loved John. News of his death sent a shock wave throughout our growing community. He was a major commercial vendor who had been in business providing horticulture growing supplies for years. The number of vendors selling supplies was already shrinking, and the loss of our friend John left us with one less resource.

During the call, we were asked to consider becoming an AVSA Commercial Member. Wow — it was overwhelming to even consider how to fill those really big shoes. The reality of opening a new business was scary. Could we build our hobby into a real business that would meet customer expectations? Would we be able to survive?

Glenda's House of Violets is Born

Seems we were bored just sitting around enjoying the freedom of retirement. We decided to open our doors in 2017, and the hard work began. Jim officially named the business when he surprised me with a carved wood sign emblazoned with our new name. We drafted a simple business plan that included business goals and a proposed five-year budget. We completed the state and federal paperwork to obtain proper operating licenses and



permits. We spent many hours researching wholesale resources for supplies. Seed money was provided by our personal funds to purchase initial inventory.

To further facilitate sales as well as public outreach and education (a main focus of GHV), we created an eCommerce website/online store. The website offers links and free downloads of growing information (videos, PowerPoint presentations, PDF files, etc.), as well as the GHV blog, AV Chatterbox.

Today, we select growing supplies after closely listening to customers, followed by thorough research of an extensive community of wholesale resources (horticulture and other industries). Jim is lovingly referred to as the GHV Chief Procurement Officer because of his incredible product searching skills that support our large, diverse collection of growing supplies. We like to think of GHV as the “kewl tool people.”

GHV also sells a limited supply of starter plants grown from our own plant stock. We sell at our physical store location in McDade, Texas, and at local, state and national sales and conventions. On occasion, we offer leaf set boxes (leaves only, no plants) for sale via our online store.

We’re sometimes asked, does a commercial African violet business make money? Specifically for GHV, yes, we do make enough to comfortably supplement retirement. However, it has to be tough for commercials to support themselves when sales are slow. Commercials rely on our growing communities to support our small businesses however and whenever possible.

Benefits of AVSA Membership

One of the main ways we’ve grown our business is by becoming an AVSA Commercial Member. While other sales and informational venues such as eBay or Facebook Marketplace are available, we decided it was best to build our business model around the diverse opportunities offered by our online store and the benefits of our AVSA Commercial Membership.

Over the past few years, AVSA has made significant progress in using new information technologies to redefine our online public face. The organization

uses powerful tools such as the new website, social media, video and the new iMIS membership system to provide worldwide public outreach and education to our growing communities. AVSA uses email to regularly and frequently report on the latest happenings. Commercial member links are frequently included in these emails. AVSA Commercial Members now benefit from a significant uptick in online advertising through these new technologies — at no additional cost!

Commercials benefit from online and automated advertising during conventions and other special events. AVSA also offers ad space in *African Violet Magazine* for additional fees. We have connections with talented graphic design professionals who can help create that eye-catching ad.

AVSA Commercial Membership offers the opportunity to be part of African violet-related events such as conventions and sales. Participating as a virtual or in-person speaker is an excellent opportunity to get your brand out there. Whether you are growing plants, selling supplies or providing educational materials, there are numerous opportunities available to promote your business.

We highly recommend any African violet or gesneriad-related businesses consider an AVSA Commercial Membership because of its many financial benefits. Becoming a Commercial Member just got easier because AVSA lowered commercial dues to \$50 a year. With luck, this will encourage more small businesses to join the AVSA commercial family.

Economic reasons aren’t the only things that keep us with AVSA. The African violet and gesneriad growing family is a truly special group of people. When we get together in person and online for events, there is a special chemistry at play. We consider ourselves fortunate to be retired and able to travel to attend many of the events. Connecting with all our plant-growing friends is truly inspirational and a lot of fun. There is nothing in this world that can equate to the joy it brings.

Being an AVSA Commercial Member is icing on the cake. Thank you for your support. You are the real reason we are a part of the AVSA commercial family!

The Many Benefits of an AVSA Membership

By Stephen Covolo-Hudson

Email: membership@avsa.org

If you aren't already a member of the African Violet Society of America, we hope you will consider becoming a member this month. Here are more details about the association and why membership is worth it.

A Brief History

The African Violet Society of America, Inc. (AVSA) was organized on November 8, 1946 and incorporated on June 30, 1947. Since then, it has grown to be one of the largest societies devoted to a single indoor plant. We are a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

What We Do

Since its inception, the AVSA membership has grown to include both amateur and professional/commercial growers from all over the world. Our stated goals are simple. We want to connect like-minded members in all aspects of growing, promoting, distribution, record keeping, exhibiting and publishing accurate information on African violets. AVSA also maintains the registry for all African violets for the International Cultivar Registration Authority. The Authority is responsible for ensuring that the name of plant cultivars and cultivar groups are defined and not duplicated.

African Violet Magazine

Joining AVSA allows you access to the bimonthly *African Violet Magazine*. The *AVM* is the backbone of the organization. It incorporates our goals and brings them to life every other month. The compact and slick layout of the *AVM* is easy to read and full of beautiful photographs of your favorite plant.

You can use the *AVM* as a resource to contact and conduct any business you may want to do with AVSA. That information is located on the inside

front cover. The most current and updated news about happenings of the organization is also made available. The scope is vast, from who's winning at an affiliate show to a message from our president.

Shopping is made simple by contacting any of our Commercial Members and advertisers. These members produce the highest-quality products and provide you with needed information.

Our feature columnists and authors provide content so we can be on the cutting edge of all information related to African violets. All members are invited to write articles to support the *AVM*. I know our editor is always looking for new content.

Digital AVM

The newest aspect of the *AVM* is the digital copies that can now be obtained by joining with a Digital Membership. They are also offered as a bonus when you join with an Individual Membership. The digital format is available on the first day of the month when the magazine is released. It's published in the Members Only Access section — no USPS delivery delays. The most exciting news is now there will be twelve months of back issues at no extra charge. In addition, the current and immediate past issues are also available for download, or you can just read them on the website.

But Wait — There's More

Other membership benefits are discounts on products sold by AVSA, a complimentary subscription to the *AVSA News* email newsletter and qualifying to enter the national show early. I hope you will avail yourself of these and other benefits and join today.



Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

Email: registration@avsa.org

■ Joan Baker — Thief River Falls, MN

Rivermist Blizzard

- (11329) 12/18/2021 •(J. Baker)
- Single-semidouble white large wavy star.
- Variegated medium green and white, pointed, quilted, serrated. •Standard

Rivermist Chaos

- (11330) 12/18/2021 •(J. Baker)
- Single-semidouble light pink ruffled star/variable lavender stripe, purple streak fantasy, white puff fantasy.
- Variegated medium green and white, pointed, quilted, serrated. •Standard

Rivermist Darling

- (11331) 12/18/2021 •(J. Baker)
- Single-semidouble white ruffled star/pink eye, variable pink rays.
- Variegated light green and white, pointed, wavy, serrated. •Standard

Rivermist Fearless

- (11332) 12/18/2021 •(J. Baker)
- Semidouble dark red frilled star.
- Variegated medium green and white, quilted/red back. •Standard

Rivermist Ladybird

- (11333) 12/18/2021 •(J. Baker)
- Single light pink sticktite wavy star/variable darker pink rays.
- Variegated dark green and white, scalloped, girl foliage. •Small standard

Rivermist Loverboy

- (11334) 12/18/2021 •(J. Baker)
- Single white sticktite wavy star/blue-purple eye.
- Variegated medium green and white, quilted, serrated. •Standard

Rivermist Lovergirl

- (11335) 12/18/2021 •(J. Baker)
- Single white sticktite fluted star/fuchsia-red eye.
- Variegated medium green, pink and white, quilted, serrated. •Standard

Rivermist Sizzle

- (11336) 12/18/2021 •(J. Baker)
- Semidouble-double fuchsia-red frilled star/white puff fantasy.
- Variegated dark green and white, ovate, quilted, serrated. •Standard

Rivermist Stinger

- (11337) 12/18/2021 •(J. Baker)
- Single pale pink pansy wasp/darker pink rays.
- Dark green, pointed, wavy, serrated/red back.
- Small standard

Rivermist Sweetheart

- (11338) 12/18/2021 •(J. Baker)
- Single bright pink star/white puff fantasy.
- Variegated medium green and white, quilted, scalloped, girl foliage. •Small standard

Rivermist Tattoo

- (11339) 12/18/2021 •(J. Baker)
- Single-semidouble light lavender pansy/purple fantasy. •Medium green, quilted. •Standard

Rivermist Tempest

- (11340) 12/18/2021 •(J. Baker)
- Single-semidouble white-pink ruffled star/darker pink shading and rays.
- Variegated medium green and white, quilted, wavy, serrated. •Standard

Rivermist Zephyr

- (11341) 12/18/2021 •(J. Baker)
- Single blue-purple sticktite star/pink fantasy, white puff fantasy.
- Variegated dark green and white, quilted, serrated, girl foliage. •Standard

■ Registration Change

The following has been changed by the Plant Registration Committee:

Little Seagull

- (5989) Change blossom description from "Single chimera white/dark blue stripe" to "Single chimera dark blue pansy/white stripe."



In Search of New Violets

By Dr. Jeff Smith

Email: jsmith4@bsu.edu

Hopefully your plants are doing well and getting ready for a good summer season. May and June are still excellent times to make pollinations and produce seed pods for next winter. See if the questions in this column give you any new ideas for crosses.

Q: I am interested in plants with the colored eye trait in the center of the flowers, such as those seen in the Optimara MyLove series. Any tips on how this trait is inherited?

A: It's interesting that you see this trait as a colored eye trait. I've viewed the trait as very wide white edges. That's probably because I've seen and worked with the white edge trait known as Geneva edges. However you see or label the trait, the pattern is a genetic dominant. As long as one parent has the trait, approximately half of the offspring should inherit the pattern. Being a dominant makes the trait relatively easy to work with and rewarding, since only one generation is needed.

Q: I love the Optimara LooXo series since they lack stamens and don't attract thrips. Any idea how this trait is inherited?

A: Lacking stamens means that you can only use the Optimara LooXo series plants as seed parents. I've not seen data on actual crosses using these plants, but the lack of stamens is likely a mutation in the developmental genes of the Hox series. In other cases, mutations of the Hox genes are inherited as genetic dominants. You should be able to use an Optimara LooXo plant as the seed parent and another plant as the pollen parent. If the lack of stamens is a genetic dominant, approximately half or more of the seedlings should inherit the trait.

Hox gene mutations sometimes show a range of expressions in the offspring. You may find that some seedlings will lack stamens, similar to the LooXo parent, while others have a reduced number of stamens or perhaps infertile stamens. The Hox gene mutation plant Saintpaulia Botanika was found to produce the mutation in the F1 generation as predicted, but the effect of the petals and stamens was somewhat variable.

Q: Since white is considered the most recessive flower color, is it always true that a cross of white x white will always produce 100% white flowered offspring?

A: Yes, you should generally get 100% white offspring from a cross of two white flowered parents. Having said this, I might mention that there is some evidence that there may be more than one type of "white" mutation. If this is correct, crossing two plants that have different white mutations may cause them to complement each other and restore the production of pigment in the offspring. Think of multiplying two negative numbers together and getting a positive outcome. Genetic mutations may not actually be in the same gene even though the phenotypes look very similar. White flower color may be a case in point, allowing the two types of white mutations to complement and restore the ability to make color.

Another possibility is that the white color could be artificially induced because of high temperatures. Plants with the thumbprint mutation can produce fully white flowers when grown warm. The genotype, however, is unchanged and the plant still has the genes to produce colored flowers under cooler growing conditions. Using a white thumbprint plant in the cross could easily result in colored flowered offspring. If you make

a cross of white x white and get colored offspring, double check the parents for possible temperature effects on their flower color to make sure they are really genetic whites.

Q: Is it possible to combine bustled foliage with girl foliage?

A: As far as I know, it is possible. Both are dominant leaf traits, so crossing a girl-foliaged plant with a bustled-foliaged plant should result in some offspring with the combination of both traits. However, bustled foliage tends to appear on larger leaves and girl foliage tends to decrease leaf size. The interaction may give girl-foliage leaves with just hints of bustling. You might get a clearer expression of the bustled trait if you use a girl-foliage plant with the largest leaves possible in the cross. Good luck.

Q: Is it possible for a plant to produce chimera flowers on only one side? Doesn't the whole plant have to sport to be a chimera?

A: Here is another example of the weird and wonderful world of chimeras. No, the entire plant does not have to sport to produce a chimera. Sometimes, only a section of the stem has the slippage in the tissue layers that produces chimera flowers. If the plant is multiple crowned, such as in a trailing African violet, perhaps one stem will sport to a chimera and the others will remain normal. In rosette-style plants, perhaps only half the crown will be a chimera.

Taking bloom stalk cuttings or suckers from the chimera side may allow the "capture" of a new chimera mutation. It takes patience and a bit of luck, but plants that are partial chimeras may be converted into full chimeras through this process.



Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky

**Mac's
Strawberry Sundae**

Grown by: Debbie McInnis
Hybridized by: G. McDonald
Semiminiature



Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Buckeye Freckles Galore

Grown by: Linda Lieu
Hybridized by: P. Hancock
Large



Photo credit: Tatiana Valkova

**VaT-Pennaia
Vecherinka**

Cyber Diamond Convention

Hybridized by: T. Valkova
Standard



Photo credit: Natalia and Sergey Burkatskaie

BR-Ogan Prometeia

Cyber Diamond Convention

Hybridized by: N. and
S. Burkatskaie
Standard

How to Start and Maintain a Backup Collection

By Sandra Skalski

Email: publications@avsa.org

While grooming my plants, I discovered that Von's Busy Bea, a favorite mini, had developed a zippered center. Zippering, or fasciation, causes the growing center of a plant to split into multiple crowns or growing points (see page 36 for more details on this phenomenon). But I didn't lose Von's Busy Bea from my collection. I took down a sealed box from a shelf that sits between two light stands. Inside was another Von's Busy Bea. The little plantlet didn't look as good as the plant I lost, but it should respond well to repotting and better light.

The plantlet lived inside a box of just-in-case backup plants. I started keeping a backup collection in 2010 after I lost nearly all of my plants to impatiens necrotic spot virus. It took a couple of years to replace the plants I lost, and I was unable to find a few favorite varieties. I vowed to both prevent thrips infestations and keep replacements for all my favorite hybrids. The collection lives in sealed boxes that I call my "just-in-cases" or "arks."

Why Maintain a Backup Collection?

Why would you want to have a backup collection? Pests, diseases or even power outages can wipe

out a collection. Growing two plants of the same variety in the same place isn't really a backup. If some disaster should befall your collection, you may lose them both.

While there are tens of thousands of African violet varieties, we all have our favorites. You can find popular varieties from several sources, but what about the rare or the vintage? Does anyone still grow Party Lace, a semimini from 1982? I have one of these oldies-but-goodies in my collection. I still mourn the loss of Kilauea, a standard chimera. Every specimen I've found over the years has reverted, and none have come close in symmetry or floriferousness to the one I lost.

In her excellent book, "Growing to Show," Pauline Bartholomew explained how to store African violets if you want to keep a variety but take a break from growing it for a while. She described a method of saving the crown of a plant in order to preserve the variety. You keep it alive but not really growing until you want to grow it again. Bartholomew's method has the crown of the plant potted in a small pot and placed in minimal light. The plants get just enough water for the spark of life to remain, but for actual growth to be slow.

This method works well if you are moving across the country and transporting dozens of full-size plants isn't practical. It needs a few tweaks for a backup collection. Her instructions recommend growing plants out in the open and watering sparingly. If you grow plants in complete isolation,



These plastic containers or "arks" contain Skalski's backup African violet collection.

this might work. However, I grow for show, so the risk of disease would remain. The sealed boxes I use prevent pests and diseases. Plus, if we lost power for days, I could move the boxes to a warm location.

Setting Up a Backup Collection

It's easy to set up a backup collection, and it can be as large or small as you'd like. For supplies, you will need clear plastic boxes that latch shut. Make sure they are tall enough to accommodate the leaves of young standard plants but not so large that they are hard to accommodate in your growing area. You won't have the boxes in ideal light conditions, so the leaves tend to reach. I use clear Sterilite boxes in 7- and 15-quart sizes. You can also use empty lettuce bins, although they may not always seal well enough.



A peek inside Skalski's backup collection.

Line each of your containers with the matting of your choice. I use black or purple felt. The matting will absorb the water that condenses at the top of the container and trickles back down to the bottom. For this method to work, each pot must be flat against the matting, so don't overcrowd the boxes. I use small white or red Solo cups for

most of the plants. Smaller minis may go into condiment cups. Use scissors to cut a bit of the bottom edge of the cup on either side. This improves the contact with the capillary matting.

If the plants go dry, you need to be very careful with rehydration. Flooding the dry pots with water is guaranteed to cause rot. Use a squirt bottle to water each pot a little at a time.

Place only healthy plants in the box. One plant with a case of soil mealy bugs will infect all the rest. The same goes for any other type of pest or disease. The time to set up your backup collection is before you run into any issues.

Plants grown from suckers preserve the original genetic material and make excellent box plants. Trailers don't seem to do as well as single-crown plants. At first, I thought that rooting a multi-crowned cutting would give me a nice plant to restart. However, the humidity made those cuttings develop aerial roots, and they did not do well in the boxes. I've had better success with rooting a single-crown trailer cutting.

Keeping the Collection Healthy

When you first set up a box, you must monitor it closely for the first few weeks. The trick is to get the moisture balance just right. Too little moisture and the plants will dry out. Too much water will make the plants rot. Start off with

plants potted as you normally grow them and capillary matting that is wet but not dripping and adjust from there. You don't want the plants to grow a lot. The idea is to keep them small but healthy.

If the plants go dry, you need to be very careful with rehydration. Flooding the dry pots with water is guaranteed to cause rot and you could lose the entire box. Use a squirt bottle to water each pot a little at a time over a week to ten days. When the center leaves are all turgid again, remove dead or rotten leaves and let the plants recover for a few weeks. Repot the plants once they have fully recovered.

Most of my boxes sit between two light stands. A few of them have some LED strip lights above them. Once you have gotten the moisture level correct, check the boxes every couple of months and water as needed. Although they are sealed, some moisture will escape and the boxes can dry out. Remove any blossoms, dead or dying leaves, and rotten material.

After about a year in the box, the plants will look pretty ratty. Repot them once a year. I repot the arks in February after I've finished repotting my main collection in January. About this time, I have a lot of new babies. If I lose a backup plant, I can replace it with a new one.

There's another
way to back up
your collection.
Share your favorite
plants with your
growing friends.

If you have multiple boxes, keep a record of what plants are in each. This way, if you need to retrieve one, you won't be searching through all of them.

There's another way to back up your collection. Share your favorite plants with your growing friends. You'll not only make new friends happy, you may be creating a path to get a beloved variety back in your own hands someday. If you grow any older varieties, be sure to check out the "Most Wanted Violets" page on the AVSA website. You may be growing a vintage plant that somebody is searching for.

Growing Tip

"4-ply acrylic yarn is awesome for wick watering. I like to ensure even moisture by spreading the plies throughout the pot. For a 4-inch pot, tape one ply each at 12, 3, 6 and 9 o'clock, leaving the yarn at the bottom going into the reservoir twisted together. Fill the pot so the

individual plies end up all around the root ball. For a 3-inch pot, remove one ply and tape the remaining ones at 12, 4 and 8 o'clock. A 2-inch pot use only two plies at 12 and 6 o'clock. Thimble pots get one ply." —RJ Miesemer



Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky

***Columnea* 'Broget Stavanger'**

Grown by: Paul Sorano

2022 Article Contest —

Having Trouble with Your Wicks?

By Karyn Cichocki

Email: kdco5@ptd.net

I use a method to wick water my African violets that I learned from Pat Hancock, in which a plastic grate is held up in a tray with an acrylic mat over the grating. A friend said to me, “If you are wicking the plants, why are you bothering with the acrylic matting?” I thought about this and wondered the same thing. I have to change the mats on a regular basis because of fertilizer salt buildup and because the plants’ roots grow into the mats if I don’t repot often.



A growing tray with an acrylic mat over the grating.
All photos by Karyn Cichocki.



A wick-watered African violet on a grate with no mat.

the wicking action, because of this space and the wick being out in the air, it will dry out. Even if the part in the pot is wet and you have the end in the water, that dried-out part of the wick will not allow water to be absorbed.

My conversation with Pat helped me solve another problem. I’ve also been using yogurt cups for my wicking reservoir for many years now, but several years ago, the companies started using aluminum foil to cap the cups, so I had no more covers for the reservoirs. I started using one-quarter-inch metal screening to create a top that I placed over the yogurt cup so a pot could be placed on top of it.

Well, this past year, I once again had sporadic problems with the pots drying out. I repotted the plants in November 2021 and was doing everything the same. I even prewet the wicks as Dale Martens had mentioned in a program she did for the local club I belong to.

So, when I was repotting all my violets in May 2021, I decided to do away with the mats. I put long wicks into the pots so they would hang down through the grating into the water in the tray. A month later, I wondered why I was having so much trouble with the pots drying out. I couldn’t figure this out, so I decided to put the mats back on all the trays. Once I did this, I no longer had a problem with the pots drying out.

I was speaking to Pat Hancock right after the new year and mentioned this problem. Of course, she came up with the solution to the mystery. When you have the wicks hanging down through the grating into the water, there is a space between where the wick comes out of the pot and where it enters the water. Regardless of wetting the wick and starting

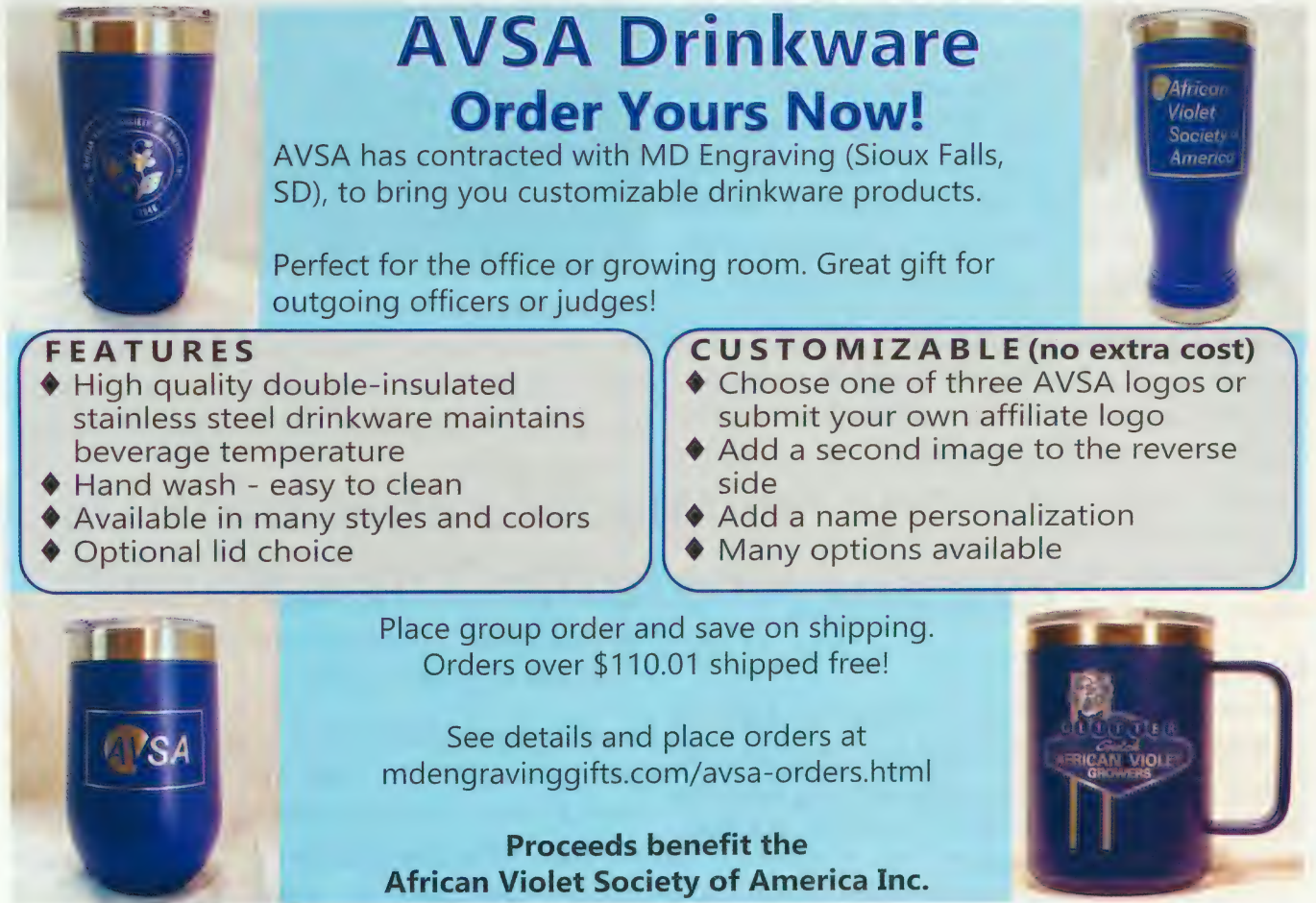
I finally realized I was experiencing the same problem with the pots as I was with the trays: There was a space between the wick coming out of the pot, going through the screening and entering the water, so the wicks were drying out. It began happening because during the holidays, I let the water get lower in the reservoirs than I normally do, so there was more air getting to the wicks to dry them out. Plus, with winter being upon us, the air was drier, so the wicks were drying out faster.

I went to the dollar store and bought an assortment of plastic containers with tops. I cut two holes in the tops: one for the wick and one to pour water into. Even if the water level gets low in the containers, because there is a top, the wick doesn't get as much air circulation and the wick won't dry out.

Many thanks to Pat Hancock for the wicking method but also for solving my mystery.



Putting lids on the reservoirs helped the wicks stay wet.



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Experimenting with Reservoir pH

By Jennifer Vincent

Email: jensbloomhouse@gmail.com

Some of my plants grow beautifully. I would be proud to take them to a show. Other plants just are not as perfect as I would like (a little yellow on the edges of leaves, leaves standing up). Over the years, I have experimented with light, fertilizer, water and soilless mixes. I wick water most of my gesneriads and grow them on plastic grating set over reservoirs called 1020 trays.

Recently, I wondered what happened to the water in my reservoirs over time. For a long time, I watered my plants with filtered tap water mixed with fertilizer and the calcium/magnesium/iron supplement Cal-Mag Plus. I knew the pH of between 6.5 and 7.0 worked well for my mixed water. Then, I moved to a new house about half a mile from my old one. The new house has the same water, but it goes through a water softener. I tried using the softened water for several months and had plants that were not growing well and starting to yellow. To fix the issue, I bought a reverse osmosis system, but I was still having some plants with tight centers and yellowing on the edges.

I tested my reverse osmosis water pH when I first started using it but hadn't tested it since. So, my goal was to figure out why reverse osmosis water was not working as well as I had hoped. I thought it might have something to do with the pH, which might be affected by the cleanliness of the reservoirs. Some people clean them once a month. I clean them maybe twice a year.

My Hypothesis

The pH of reservoir water will change over a period of weeks and may be affected by 1) how full the tray is with water, 2) how clean the tray is at the beginning of the period and 3) whether Seachem Neutral Regulator is added.

My goal was to figure out why reverse osmosis water was not working as well as I had hoped on my African violets. I thought it might have something to do with the pH in the reservoirs.

My Experiment

My standard water mix is reverse osmosis water with 1/4 teaspoon of Dyna-Gro Foliage fertilizer per gallon of water and 1/4 teaspoon of Cal-Mag Plus per gallon.

Tray #1 started with a clean tray, reverse osmosis water, 1/4 teaspoon of Dyna-Gro Foliage fertilizer per gallon of water, 1/4 teaspoon of Cal-Mag Plus per gallon and 1/8 teaspoon of Seachem Neutral Regulator.

Tray #2 started with a tray that already had my standard water mix that had been sitting for over a week and was half full. I added reverse osmosis water, 1/4 teaspoon of Dyna-Gro Foliage fertilizer per gallon of water, 1/4 teaspoon of

Cal-Mag Plus per gallon and 1/8 teaspoon of Seachem Neutral Regulator to fill the tray to the bottom of the grating.

Tray #3 was my control. I just left the standard water mix that was in there for a week or more.

Tray #4 started with a clean tray, reverse osmosis water, 1/4 teaspoon of Dyna-Gro Foliage fertilizer per gallon of water and 1/4 teaspoon of Cal-Mag Plus per gallon. (No Seachem Neutral Regulator.)

My Conclusions

- In one week, the reverse osmosis water with fertilizer and Cal-Mag water in tray 4 dropped from over 7.5 to below 6.0, possibly causing nutrient lockouts to happen in some of my plants.
- The fullness of the tray only has an effect because the water stays in the tray longer and there is more time for the pH to change.
- The cleanliness of the tray did not have an effect in my experiment but could long term.
- The Seachem Neutral Regulator (which was in trays 1 and 2) kept my water pH in a much better range for over two weeks. In both cases, it only decreased from 7.6 to 6.6.
- In my opinion, if I top or bottom watered instead of wick watering, the plants would not be exposed

to the lower pH, which developed over the nearly two weeks the water sat in the tray. That means they would probably not experience nutrient issues.

- I have not used the Seachem Neutral Regulator long enough to determine if there are any unknown side effects, but I know several growers who have used it for years without issue.

Update

After I ended the experiment, I decided to use the Seachem Neutral Regulator with 25% tap water (I had one of my faucets switched to unsoftened water), 75% reverse osmosis water and 1/4 teaspoon of Dyna-Gro Foliage fertilizer per gallon of water. Reverse osmosis water does not have anything in it to keep the pH stabilized. Some hydroponic growers add 25% tap water to their reverse osmosis water to help stabilize the pH or use a stabilizer. The new leaves on my plants look great!

Please take a careful look at your setup before changing your water pH. The pH of your potting mix, the temperature in your house, the ingredients in your fertilizer and more affect what the pH of your starting water should be.

African Violet Magazine

Article and Column Deadlines

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| •January/February issue: November 1 | •July/August issue: May 1 |
| •March/April issue: January 1 | •September/October issue: July 1 |
| •May/June issue: March 1 | •November/December issue: September 1 |

We would love to hear from you! Please send articles or article ideas for the *AVM* to Sophia Bennett at editor@avsa.org.



Photo credit: Natalia Kozak

NK-Akordi Doschu

Cyber Diamond Convention

Hybridized by: N. Kozak

Standard

Power Outage Blues

By Sharon Rosenzweig

Email: srosenzw100@comcast.net

Climate change comes with crazy weather patterns. A few years back, when the weather bureau predicted the “storm of the season,” it seemed inevitable that the power would go out. The only question was, when and for how long? These were the steps I took to prepare my plants.

Sunday (Two Days Before)

Preparations began. I removed all the plants from their wick reservoirs and placed them on newspaper to dry out as much as possible.

Monday (Morning Of)

Kept listening to the weather report; remained optimistic.

Tuesday (Day Of)

The power went out at 4 a.m. At 9 a.m., the thermostat in the plant room read 62 degrees F. I began to identify the warmest locations in the house. I wondered if are plants like people — will they stay warmer if they are crowded together?

By early afternoon, the temperature was down to 60 F. Time to build a fire and move as many plants as possible around the fireplace. That felt nice and cozy — the whole family together: my husband, the plants and me. I began collecting boxes, plastic tubs, insulated coolers, anything we could use to transport the plants to a warmer location if evacuation became necessary.

By early evening, with the thermostat reading 55 F, I started heating pots of water on the gas grill. I placed a large one in the downstairs bathroom and a small one inside the oven. I put scatter rugs under the plants because the tile floor was getting cold, and placed two cookie trays of plants in the oven. (Please do not let me forget they're in there!)

Big candles went on the lowest shelves of the plant stands to warm the plants on the upper shelves.

With the temperature down to 50 F, we made plans to sleep at my daughter's house. Now came the task of packing up the plants. I filled all the available containers, taking care not to break leaves or flowers. About half of my collection spent the night in the cold; the rest came with us.

Wednesday (Day After)

When I returned home, the power was still out. Should I remain optimistic that it would return and leave the remaining plants in place? I took them to work with me. It caused quite a stir, with coworkers stopping by to ask if I was selling plants. They were disappointed when I said no.

Thursday (Next Day)

The power was restored when I got home from work. I happily proceeded to recover the violets from all of their hiding places.

Saturday (Two Days After)

I retrieved the displaced plants from my daughter's house and work, accidentally setting off the office alarm.

Sunday (Three Days After)

Everything was back to normal — almost. My husband was doing laundry and discovered one last tray of violets in the dryer.

Overall Effects of the Experience

The violets were no worse for the wear, but I was exhausted from the stress of it all. After having seen my plants in the office, several coworkers brought me their violets to nurse back to health or into bloom. If another big storm hits in the future, would I do this again? Probably.



Family Portrait: *Codonanthe devosiana*

By Paul Kroll

Email: pfkroll@me.com

My choice for this issue's family portrait is a plant that we have seen in shows for many years. It has been exhibited under several names, including *Codonanthe devosiana*, *Codonanthe digna* and *Codonanthe* 'Paula'. It is a vining gesneriad with round, shiny leaves and small, delicate blooms along its vines. It makes a lovely hanging basket plant and can easily be grown in various sizes of pots.

Dr. Alain Chautems has done some research on this genus and wrote:

"The only information I can give you is that *Codonanthe devosiana* is a relatively common species in the Atlantic rain forest between the state of Rio de Janeiro and Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil. It grows from near sea level to 1,000 meters (rarely 1,200



Codonanthe devosiana grown and photographed by Ralph Robinson at The Violet Barn.

meters) high. There is quite some variation in hair covering, as well in corolla color (from white to pink). That is the reason why I consider that the name *C. digna* and *C. 'Paula'* cannot be recognized at the species level: they represent only a cultivar name following introduction of material from Brazil in cultivation. During my field experiences in Brazil, I have been unable to recognize these particular forms of *C. digna* and *C. 'Paula'* restricted to a locality. Variation is quite continuous all over the distribution of *C. devosiana*."

I have always grown my *C. devosiana* under lights and it flourishes with no special care. I recently tore apart a plant that had been in the same pot for two years! I started out grooming it with the idea of moving it to a new, larger pot. As I worked on the plant, I realized that there were many woody stems. I changed my mind and took 24 cuttings, putting them into a new pot to root. I placed that pot in a plastic bag and will wean those cuttings from the terrarium conditions in about six weeks. When they have grown out a bit, I will prune the growth tips to encourage branching. Within perhaps three or four months, I will have a nice, bushy plant.

I have always grown
my *C. devosiana* under
lights and it flourishes
with no special care.

Whenever I prepare cuttings of a vining gesneriad such as *Codonanthe* or *Aeschynanthus*, I strip off the leaves from at least two sets of nodes on the stem to put into the rooting medium, with at least two sets of leaves on top of the soil line. Tip cuttings grow most easily, but cuttings taken from all along the stems will work this same way.

I have used small plants of *Codonanthe* in container gardens with good results. They are small leaved and fit quite nicely into each garden's landscape plan with the proper perspective on size. This genus should be exhibited in the blooming class of gesneriads. If it were entered in the class labeled "Gesneriads Grown for Ornamental Factors Other Than Bloom," it would not score highly in the Ornamental Factors category.

"Perfectly Pittman" Video

This video chronicles the multiple hybrids, growing techniques, growing spaces and AVSA involvement of Hortense and Ray Pittman.



Jolly Orchid

Available in the
AVSA Store.
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format \$20

My Experiment with LECA

By Peg Crawford

Email: peg_crawford@msn.com

Last year, I noticed quite a few posts in the various Facebook African violet groups about growing in a product called LECA. LECA is an acronym for “lightweight expanded clay aggregate.” It is produced by heating clay pellets in a super-hot oven or kiln, which results in the expanded gases forming a honeycomb structure within each LECA clay pellet, making it very porous and lightweight.

Since many of us growers already know that our violets can do very well growing on wicks, growing in LECA simulates that environment a bit. The LECA pellets soak up fertilized water and yet, because these pellets are round and marble sized, there are many air gaps in between them. Also, our African violets were originally found in the rocky areas of Tanzania, so my suspicion was that this LECA environment might replicate some of the rocky nooks where African violets grow in the wild. However, it is very important that your soil mixture be light and porous, as violets do not like having wet feet.



S. 5h clone rupicolus was planted in LECA in August 2021.

I ordered a small bag of LECA from Amazon and selected four violets for this experiment. Two were species plants: *S. 5h clone rupicolus* and *S. clone diplotrichus* Uppsala (I’m uncertain of the number). Two were hybrid varieties: Tiger, a vintage variety, and Hunter’s Clear Night Sky, a newer hybrid. The LECA was soaked overnight in plain warm water and then, in the morning, I drained it and rinsed it again with clear water (much like perlite, there is a lot of dust in the LECA bag). Then I shook as much soil as possible off the roots of the selected plants and gently “planted” them in the LECA. I placed each in a clear glass jar or plastic drinking glass so I could see the water level and roots. I added water containing fertilizer into each container, filling each to a little more than halfway up the side. Then, I placed them under my grow lights and let them do their thing.

In the end, the results were fairly good. The two species African violets seemed to like the LECA. They grew larger leaves that were deeper green in color and put up a lot of nice purple flowers.

The hybrids were also successful, but less so. Tiger did better than the Hunter’s variety. It grew larger, kept her variegation and grew lots of flowers. Hunter’s Clear Night Sky did grow larger, but it seemed to be growing slowly and rather tight. She also flowered for me but then stopped growing bigger. It could be she just did not like my light stand (they were all on the same shelf under 4-foot LED shop lights that were on for 10 hours per day) or the temperature in my house. It’s also possible the Hunter’s plant felt a little pot-bound.



The species plants performed better in the LECA than the hybrid varieties. S. 5h clone *rupicolus* grew larger leaves and put out numerous flowers.

Will I put more plants in LECA? Maybe. I think I will experiment with more species violets in LECA and see how they respond. I may also try putting LECA pellets in the bottom of my Oyama pots to replace the perlite that is normally put there and see how that works.

However, it is very important to keep in mind when trying anything new to make sure you experiment with only a few plants at a time. Please do NOT experiment on your entire collection, as there is no guarantee that your results will all be positive.



Photo credit: Penny Smith-Kerker

Spring Peach

Grown by: Penny Smith-Kerker
Hybridized by: H. Pittman
Miniature



Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky

***Primulina dryas* 'Latifolia Dwarf'**

Grown by: Richard Nicholas



Photo credit: Stephen Covolo

Steffano's Early Frost

Cyber Diamond Convention

Hybridized by: S. Covolo
Standard



Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Lilac Fanfare

Grown by: Paul Sorano
Hybridized by: Lyndon Lyon
Greenhouses
Large

Fascinating or Frustrating? Fasciated African Violets

By Joyce Stork

Email: joycestork@avsa.org

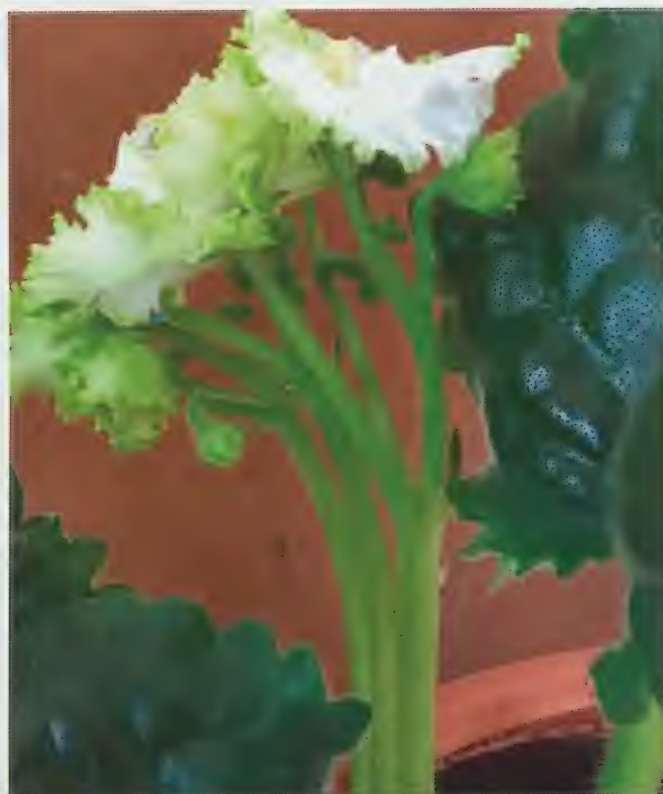
Fasciation is a rare mutation that has been seen in many different plant types, including African violets. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines it this way: “a malformation of plant stems commonly manifested as enlargement and flattening as if several stems were fused.” The term “zippering” is sometimes used in Facebook groups to describe this trait in African violets.



The top of a fasciated crown with new centers developing in a crest or line. Photo credit: Shane Morel.

Fasciation expresses itself in several ways in violets. A leaf may have a thickened stem and two blades — sometimes called a conjoined leaf. Or a flower stem may have multiple stems fused together. Either is often the first signal that the genetics are going wrong inside a plant. Fasciation may also cause the crown to become crested so that

all the new growth develops in a ridge of new centers rather than in the usual rosette.



Conjoined blossom stems. Photo credit: Feri Ahmadzadeh.

Fasciation is probably the result of a cultural stress and may be permanent. A few growers report that they have seen a hybrid produce only one set of conjoined leaves and never had another issue. But others report that once the pattern begins, it is irreversible and continues in the offspring of propagated leaves.

African violets frequently sport. Often the mutation that occurs is disappointing; for example, a bicolor variety sporting to a solid-color blossom. Sometimes the new trait is very desirable, such as when the leaves suddenly develop variegation. Violet growers often have mixed reactions to fasciation.

Those who are collectors of oddities find it interesting and fun, but show growers hate it because a fasciated plant no longer has symmetry.

Is there any risk in keeping a fasciated violet? Possibly. Because garden plants have been known to develop fasciation triggered by *Rhodococcus fascians* bacteria, gardeners are sometimes advised to destroy fasciated garden plants to avoid contaminating others. African violets have been identified as a host of this bacteria.

In most cases, though, there isn't any danger to the collection. Many occurrences of fasciation are triggered by exposure to radiation or chemicals, or by cultural stress. Fasciation seems to be reported somewhat more often by growers who collect violets with unusual traits such as wasp blossoms, or bustle-back or girl foliage.



Conjoined leaves. Photo credit: Feri Ahmadzadeh.
Love it or throw it away ... it's up to you. But once a violet becomes fasciated, you are likely to take notice of the change.

Four-Legged Member Brightens Meetings

According to AVSA Secretary Rich Follett, "Our AVSA affiliate club, the Shenandoah Saintpaulia Society, has one four-legged member who attends every meeting and never misses an opportunity to admire the plants. Mary Jane is pictured here with Litanika and *Streptocarpus* 'Fernwood's Minuet'."

Does your club have a frequent special guest? We'd love to see pictures. Send them to editor@avsa.org for possible inclusion in a future issue of *African Violet Magazine*.



Summer Road Trips to AVSA Commercials

By Kathy Bell

Email: commercials@avsa.org

This year, instead of doing the travel guide with suggestions of AVSA Commercial Members to visit, we wanted to do something different by giving you a list of all the current AVSA Commercial Members and their contact information. If you are going to be in the area or want to make a special trip to visit a commercial grower, now you will know where to find them.

Be sure to contact commercials first. Not all of them are set up for visitors and those that are may accept visitors by appointment only.

You can also use this list to order plants and/or supplies, as most of them ship. Our commercial growers are wonderful people and a wealth of information. They have many beautiful plants you can purchase, and some have the flower pots, soil, fertilizer and all kinds of merchandise that you may need. We love our vendors, so let's give them lots of business.

■ Appalachian Violets

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bloominjungle@frontiernet.net
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■ Bloomlala

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tara@bloomlala.com
www.bloomlala.com/collections/violet

■ Christopher Violets

Brent Scheuerman
Shawnee Mission, KS 66205
(913) 738-9955
christopherviolets@yahoo.com
www.christopherviolets.com

■ Dave's Violets

David Harris
Springfield, MO 65804
(417) 887-8904
plantman57@att.net
www.davesviolets.com

■ Enchanted Gardens

Heidi Dillenbeck
Delanson, NY 12053
(518) 895-6054
heidisviolets@gmail.com
www.enchantedgardensplantsupplies.com

■ Fancy Bloomers

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www.fancy-bloomers.com

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■ **Happy Violets 4 You**

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hcav@beecreek.net
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■ **Mueller's Greenhouses**

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(760) 758-3970

■ **Nadeau African Violet Seeds**

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(314) 853-7993
avseeds@yahoo.com
www.nadeausafricanvioletseeds.com

■ **Patty's Plants and Antiques**

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(620) 402-6282
patty@ppa.kscoxmail.com
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■ **The Peacock Cottage/Dandy Pots**

Laura Perdomo
Ocala, FL 34488
(352) 624-0116
thepeacockcottage@gmail.com
www.dandypot.com

■ **Petals & Leaves Cutting Gardens and Nursery**

Diane Bowman
Ellensburg, WA 98926
(509) 423-7833
petals.leaves.gardens@gmail.com
www.petalsleaves.com

■ **Swift Moist-Rite Planters**

Connie and David Cornell
Broken Arrow, OK 74014
(918) 951-3014
moistriteplanters19@aol.com
www.swiftmoistriteplanters.com

■ **The Violet Barn**

Ralph Robinson
Naples, NY 14512
(585) 374-8592
comments@violetbarn.com
www.violetbarn.com

■ **Violet Supply (Arcadia Greenhouse)**

Giovanna Iacobacci
Madison, OH 44057
(440) 357-0022
giovanna@visiamarketing.com
www.violetsupply.com

■ **Violets & More**

Naomi Martin
Waynesboro, PA 17268
(717) 762-4130



Photo credit: Natalia Kozak

NK-Kvitkova Tiara

Cyber Diamond Convention

Hybridized by: N. Kozak
Standard



Photo credit: Natalia and Sergey Burkatskaie

BR-Tsarstvo Moroza

Cyber Diamond Convention

Hybridized by: N. and S. Burkatskaie
Standard

Suckers on African Violets

By Nancy Manozzi

Have you noticed tiny leaves coming from the stem of your African violet, not from the center or crown? These small leaves are suckers. A sucker is a tiny group of leaves that grows separately from the main plant. It can grow from the stem or “neck” or right from the crown itself. You might cut it off as soon as you see one forming so that it doesn’t affect the symmetry of the plant. You may use any object that has a sharp and/or beveled tip, like a sucker plucker, toothpick, ceramic knife, nutpick or, what I usually use, my fingernail. Another option is to wait until it is large enough to remove easily and make another plant with it.



Suckers grow separately from the main plant. They disrupt the symmetry of the plant and take energy away from flowering. All photos by Sophia Bennett.

A sucker shouldn’t be confused with a developing flower bud. The differences are as follows:

- 1) A sucker develops leaves that are bigger than the leaves you see on a developing flower bud.
- 2) A flower bud doesn’t develop more than two leaves.
- 3) Usually suckers form lower on the stem and flowering buds form toward the top.

A sucker will take a lot of energy from the plant and may reduce the amount of blooms. This is because the plant is putting its energy into making another plant, not blossoms. A sucker is the plant trying to reproduce and stay alive. There are several reasons a plant may sucker, often having to do with one’s culture, like being stressed due to poor soil, low humidity, too much or too little water, too much or too little light, or an attack of insects. They may also sucker if planted too deeply in the pot. In my collection, I see the most suckering in semiminiature and miniature varieties.



Suckers removed from an African violet.

Some African violets sucker because it’s just in their genes to do so. My Rob’s Cool Fruit, Rob’s Little Pueblo, Aly’s Blizzard Bunny and Corn’s A’

Poppin are constantly developing suckers. They are all either miniatures or semiminiatures. Since I really like these varieties, I often wait until the suckers are large enough, remove them and create additional plants.

You can force a plant to sucker by pinching out the crown. The violet will push out suckers in an attempt to survive. And as I mentioned earlier, you can easily gain more plants this way, instead of waiting for leaves to root and form babies.

Suckers are very easy to root. Just shallowly place the rootless plant into your regular, moistened potting mix. You might need to support the plant with a toothpick. Place the entire pot in a baggie, making sure the bag isn't touching the plant. The sucker should root within a few weeks. You will know that it has rooted by opening the bag and giving it a slight tug. If it doesn't come out of the soil, it has rooted and may gradually be removed from the bag. If it hasn't rooted, leave it in the bag for a few more weeks and try again.



To root a sucker, place it in moistened potting mix and place the container inside a plastic bag.

This article was originally published in the YE Bay Stater, a publication of Bay State AVS. It was first reprinted in AVM in the March/April 2007 issue.

Editor's note: In her original article, Nancy mentioned that suckers are a great way to reproduce chimeras. I reached out to Dr. Jeff Smith and asked him for more information.

A sucker is a tiny group of leaves that grows separately from the main plant. You might cut one off as soon as you see it forming, or wait until it is large enough to remove and make another plant.

"Chimeras can only be reproduced true to type if there's bud tissue involved," he says. "A leaf cutting won't work because leaves only use the outer layers of cells to make the plant, so you can't get the layering of the outer and inner tissue. When you have a sucker, it's been produced by a bud, so it contains both layers of cells."

Sometimes people will decapitate a chimera and preserve only the lowest level of leaves so the plant will produce suckers. They can be separated from the main plant and used to grow new plants. Suckers are ideal for growing not only flower chimeras but also leaf chimeras.

Commercial Member Profile: Moonlight Nursery

By Sophia Bennett

Email: editor@avsa.org

Those who like to support smaller hybridizers or seek violets that are hard to find should try their luck at Moonlight Nursery, an online African violet seller in Delaware.

Louise Thompson, owner of Moonlight Nursery, started the business seven years ago. An avid indoor and outdoor grower who caught the gardening bug from her mom, she grew African violets until she entered college and got too busy. After her first child was born, she had more time and returned to the hobby. A few years later, Brenda Petry of Violet Gallery was retiring, as were a few other commercial African violet vendors. Selling plants seemed like it might be a good side business while Thompson was at home with her son. She bought some of Petry's inventory, collaborated with hobby hybridizers and launched her business online.



Louise Thompson of Moonlight Nursery. All photos provided by Thompson.

Thompson has prioritized her growing family for the past few years, but she's eagerly building up Moonlight Nursery again this year. She carries hundreds of different varieties including

standards, miniatures, semiminiatures and trailers. The majority of her sales are in fresh leaf cuttings. "It takes a lot of space to grow out the starter plants and leaf pots," she notes. (Her growing area, which is located in a 1,750-square-foot outbuilding on her property, shares space with an art room for her homeschooled children and a long-arm quilting studio.) Customers can order plants as they become available.



Although Thompson stocks vintage African violets and plants from some of the larger hybridizers, she loves to work with smaller, lesser-known growers. Among her inventory are numerous varieties from George McDonald (Mac's series), Jeff Jackson (Imp's African violets) and the late Janet Stromborg (Allegro series). She also stocks hard-to-find varieties, including those with wasp blossoms or bustleback foliage, and a few gesneriads.

Thompson currently updates her inventory list every few weeks so customers have the most up-to-date information about what is available. She hopes to have a complete compilation of her inventory online by this fall.

Hybridizers who are looking for companies to sell their plants should also reach out. “I’m definitely looking to work with new people,” Thompson says. “I would want to make sure anyone I work with is going through the process of ensuring plants are stable and can be reproduced and stay true to the parent plant.” She enjoys getting to know new hybridizers, even if they aren’t quite ready to start selling yet.

To keep African violets healthy, “I think repotting regularly is important,” Thompson says. “So are the basics of good, consistent fertilization and good lighting.” She wick waters her plants and grows in a mix of Pro-Mix, perlite and vermiculite.



When planting leaves, some growers advise trimming the top off each leaf to prevent it from growing. “Personally, I do not do this,” she says. “I think it could increase the likelihood of rot in leaves, as it is another cut for the leaf to deal with.” People interested in more tips on successfully rooting leaves will find them in the tutorial section of the Moonlight Nursery website.

Although Thompson stocks vintage African violets and plants from some of the larger hybridizers, she loves to work with smaller, lesser-known growers. Hybridizers looking for companies to sell their plants should reach out.

Thompson also wrote a how-to guide on potting plantlets. One of her favorite pieces of advice: “If you are propagating a variety with fantasy, try to keep at least three babies. Fantasy plants will occasionally sport or produce a solid-colored flower. You will have better odds of growing a true plant if several babies are kept.”

Learn more about Moonlight Nursery at www.moonlightnursery.com.

Fund Reports for January/February 2022

By Randy G. Deutsch and Janet Riemer

Email: fundraising@avsa.org

Anne & Frank Tinari Endowment Fund: \$625

The Anne and Frank Tinari Endowment Fund supports the long-term stability of the Society.

■ \$100-\$200

Lynne Mabry
Erin Charles
Chuck Bingham

■ \$50-\$99

Levin Tilghman

■ \$25-\$49

Joan Santino
Cross Town African Violet Club, Wisconsin
Sue Ramser
Leslie Morris-Smith
James Matula
Lilianne Ager

■ Under \$25

JoAnne D'Angelo
Suet Lai Rosetta
Martin Wright
Marion Martin
Charles Biery
Virginia Gibson
Mueller Greenhouse
Thelma Heinrich
Jill Fischer

Barbara Burde Endowment Fund: \$110

The Barbara Burde Endowment Fund supports the Society's long-term needs in technology.

■ \$25-\$49

Burbank AVS, California
Laura Campbell, Camarillo, CA
Cross Town AVC, Wisconsin

■ Under \$25

Mueller Greenhouse, Vista, CA
Thelma Heinrich, Scottsdale, AZ
Suet Lai Rosetta, Hong Kong

Booster Donations: \$3,161

Booster Donations support AVSA ongoing general expenses.

■ \$1,500-\$1,599

Vivian Hiltz, Kensington, CT

■ \$500-\$599

Bergen County AVS, New Jersey

■ \$200-\$299

AVS of Minnesota

■ \$100-\$199

AVS of Minnesota
(In memory of Janice O'Neill)
North Star AV Council, Minnesota
(In memory of Janice O'Neill)
Rocky Mountain AV Council, Colorado
(In memory of Ann Watterson and Geneva Holmes)
Janice Tyler-Blanchard, Decorah, IA

■ \$50-\$99

Kathy Lahti, Annandale, MN
(In memory of Janice O'Neill)
Gail Podany, Minnetonka, MN
(In memory of Janice O'Neill)
Rocky Mountain AV Council, Colorado
(In memory of Hortense Pittman)

■ \$25-\$49

Michael Bodish, Richton, MS
Crosstown AVC, Wisconsin
Alice Dulaney, Broomall, PA
Carol Jones, Marysville, OH
Allan Morris, Houston, TX
Sandy Shaughnessy, Keystone, SD
Barbara Werness, Minneapolis, MN
(In memory of Janice O'Neill)
Charlotte Wolfe, Ann Arbor, MI

■ **Under \$25**

Edna Fischer, Forsyth, MT
Thelma Heinrich, Scottsdale, AZ
Barbara Jackson, Minnetonka, MN
Elena Martinez, Miami, FL
Holly Moses, Morgantown, WA
Mueller Greenhouse, Vista, CA
Ottawa African Violet Society, Ontario
(In honor of Karyn Cichocki)
Suet Lai Rosetta, Hong Kong
Pam Schwager, Neligh, NE
Roger Williams, Chicopee, MA

■ **\$25-\$49**

Michael Bodisch, Richton, MS
Cross Town AVC, Wisconsin

■ **Under \$25**

G. Harmon, New York, NY
Marilyn Heinrich, Northport, NY
Thelma Heinrich, Scottsdale, AZ
Mueller Greenhouse, Vista, CA
Suet Lai Rosetta, Hong Kong

Boyce Edens Research Fund: \$150

The Boyce Edens Research Fund supports research and scholarships.

■ **\$50-\$99**

Levin Tilghman, Philadelphia, PA

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bloomlala.com/collections/violet



I Bought a Plant at a Show. Now What?

By Dale Martens

Email: DaleMartens@mchsi.com

It's very exciting to purchase new plants, especially at a show or convention. There are several actions and decisions to make before they join your growing conditions, though. First of all, you'll see that most exhibitors at a show will remove all buds and flowers before the plants leave the showroom. Their concerns include thrips, which easily jump from plant to plant. They'll hide pretty much anywhere on the plant, but they do love those bright yellow pollen sacs! So, get rid of the flower stems, including the tiniest buds, before you step into your home. If you have a chimera and want to plant the flower stems, remove the buds and flowers, then place the stems in a plastic baggie for safekeeping until you get home.

The next decision is whether to put the plant in your own soil right away. "Yes" is the answer. Remove at least two leaves from the plant for propagation. If you have an insecticidal soap that is safe for African violets, spray the front and

back of each leaf. Insects and eggs easily hide on the backs of leaves near the veining. Plant the leaves in a container with a lid because that will further isolate the new leaves in case they do harbor any critters or eggs.

Keep plants isolated
until you're sure they
are pest free and ready
to join the rest of
your collection.

Next, shake off as much soil as you can. With room temperature water in a bowl or bucket, rinse the roots. Now is the time to use a magnifying glass to examine the rinse water as well as the roots for insects, especially mealy bugs, which are white and look like rice. If you see them, you'll need to decide if you'll battle them with systemic insecticides for the next few months or rely on the two leaves you took for propagation to give you fresh plants in the future.

Between each newly purchased plant you repot, you'll need to clean everything you used, including scissors, other utensils, the surface of the table and your hands, before touching another plant.

If you do not find insects, pot the plant after deciding if you want to strip off the older row of leaves that may have already bloomed. If you strip the older row of leaves, then trim perhaps the bottom inch of the main stem along with the roots. You will be burying the neck of the plant



Insecticidal soap may remove critters and eggs from newly purchased plants, but other precautions are necessary before adding the plants to your collection.

deeper, past where you removed leaves. If you have insecticidal systemic granules you can add to the soil, follow the directions on the container. Systemics only work if there are roots to absorb the chemicals. If you happen to strip all the roots and bury the neck of the plant, systemics won't be absorbed until roots are produced. In that case, plant the neck in the smallest pot you have. In about 45 days, when roots have sprouted, transplant to the next larger-size pot with systemic insecticide.

Your newly potted plant needs to be isolated in case it had insects or eggs that are not easily seen. Isolation should take about three months. You can isolate by putting the plant in a container with a lid or dome. If you do that, do not place the container where it will get sun or you'll create a hot sauna and kill the plant. Do not have groups of plants sharing a container. Any infestation in one pot will easily spread to another.

During isolation, no flower stems are allowed. By removing those

stems, you'll find energy goes into making leaves.

Sue Christison in Canada shared with me the idea of isolating plants by using a zippered plastic case formerly containing a set of bed-sheets. Her idea led me to collect them and use them as I did for this standard-size African violet I purchased at a show and repotted. It sits in a shallow container to which I add my water with fertilizer. This is just one way to keep plants isolated until you're sure they are pest free and ready to join the rest of your collection.



A zippered plastic case formerly used for bedsheets makes an ideal container for a purchased plant that needs isolation.



Join

AVSA is non-profit, educational organization dedicated to helping African violet enthusiasts enjoy these beautiful plants.

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Preparing for Convention: How is the Weather?

By Danny Tidwell

Email: dantwell@yahoo.com

How is the weather in central Arkansas in May? I am glad you asked. Late May in Arkansas is generally very pleasant and one of the busiest travel times to the Natural State. Temperatures during the day average around 80 degrees F, with nighttime temperatures falling to an average of 60 degrees F. The wildflowers should be abundant and the trees dressed in green for summer.

The Little Rock Marriott has a treasure just out the back doors: an amazing patio area overlooking the Arkansas River and walking trails with beautiful artwork and landscaping. There is a cool little waterfall feature; you can kick your shoes off and get your toes wet. The benches and tables out there would be a wonderful place to take a break, relax and enjoy the scenery as you try to figure out where you can make room for a few more

plants or even space for a new plant stand. The evenings should be very pleasant out on the patio as night sets in and the bridges come alive with a beautiful light display reflecting onto the river below.

Don't forget that the hotel has a free airport shuttle. You have to reserve your place on the shuttle the day before you arrive. To make a reservation, contact the hotel directly.

The Central Arkansas African Violet Society members are anxiously awaiting your arrival and looking forward to seeing long-time friends and making new ones. I know the showroom will be absolutely stunning as you put your talents on display with your beautiful plants and designs. We wish you all safe travels.





Senior Judges: Important Notice

By Barbara Werness

Email: seniorjudges@avsa.org

Senior Judges may apply for a renewal examination between May 1 and September 1, 2022. The examination request form can be obtained on the AVSA website in the Shows and Judges section under Member Content. Instructions for paying the \$5 fee are included on the form. Per the *AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges*, 2016 edition, page 83, proof of three blue ribbons should be sent with the form. (Proof of three blue ribbons is waived for the 2022 examination.)

You will receive the examination by email as a Microsoft Word document. **If you don't receive it, follow up with me within two weeks.** If you require a hard copy by postal mail, allow up to three weeks for delivery. Please specify an email or hard copy when you submit the registration form. Note that the *AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges*, 2016 edition, will be used for the 2022 Senior Judges examination.

A **printed hard copy (not email)** of the exam must be returned by October 1, 2022 for grading. Send all examinations to:

Barbara Werness
12354 Naples Street NE
Blaine, MN 55449

Advanced Judges who meet the requirements and wish to apply for their first Senior Judge examination can use the same request form. They also need to send the following documentation of eligibility per the AVSA Handbook, page 85 **via postal mail**:

- List of all judging schools attended, grades and any other supporting material.
- Signed schedules of five AVSA shows judged (a copy of a signed title page with all show information is sufficient).
- Verification of three blue ribbons. (Proof of three blue ribbons is waived for the 2022 examination.)

Apply by September 1, 2022. Applications postmarked after September 1, 2022, will be returned and application may be made next year.

Please include your email address and you will be notified of receipt of your exam. No exams will be returned until after October 15, 2022.

Please refer any questions regarding the Senior Judge examination to Barbara Werness.

Growing Tip

"When doing interpretive plant arrangements, wrap the root ball of the plant with colored plastic wrap (perhaps green) and then use a twist tie around the stem to secure the wrap in place. This prevents the moisture from leaking

out and making a mess of your backdrop/underlay. Poke through the wrapped root ball with a skewer to secure the plant in the position you want it." —Paul Kroll

2022 Convention Luncheon Auction Update

By Candace Baldwin

Email: auction@avsa.org

Don't let another year go by where you only hear about the cool stuff won at the AVSA National Convention Luncheon Auction. If you haven't been, make this the year you join in and catch the bidding fever!

It all starts with generous donations from our individual members, commercial members and clubs. Please consider making a donation of a violet-related item or anything rare, unique or unusual in nature. Don't forget to check your plant shelves and donate a starter plant (or two or three) of recent introductions or vintage violets. We'll acknowledge donors with a listing on all luncheon tables.

If you have an item that's too big to drag along with you, or if you just want to send it on its way now, Danny Tidwell has offered a place for you

to ship it. Mark the box or its contents as Luncheon Auction and send to:

Danny Tidwell

P.O. Box 111

McRae, AR 72102-0111

New for the 2022 convention: Watch for sneak previews of select items on the AVSA Facebook page during convention week leading up to the luncheon on Friday.

We also need volunteers to help inventory items, be spotters during the live bidding period and provide receipts to the winning bidders. Complete the online form under Luncheon Auction on the AVSA Convention website or send me an email at auction@avsa.org if you can volunteer to help or make a donation.



Photo credit: Tatiana Valkova

VaT-Brovki Domikom

Cyber Diamond Convention

Hybridized by: T. Valkova
Standard

Will You Be a First-Time Convention Attendee?

By Candace Baldwin

Email: auction@avsa.org

If you haven't yet registered for your first convention, you still can. Go to the AVSA website and click on Participate, then 2022 Convention. All the information about what's available and how to register is laid out for you.

What the website can't show you is all fun you're going to have, the learning and education you'll take home with you (not to mention the sale plants), and the opportunity to talk African violets for days without anyone rolling their eyes.

One of the questions you'll need to answer during registration is whether you want to enter any plants or designs in the show. I highly encourage you to do one or both. Many people shy away from the idea at their first convention, saying they just want to go and see what it's like before being an exhibitor. Take the plunge. The process is exhilarating and scary at the same time. Regardless, in the end, you will be excited to see your plant or design on the show table.

Once you arrive at the hotel, checking in at the AVSA Convention registration desk should be a priority. There, you will receive a package that contains information about what you registered for, the souvenir convention booklet and other assorted items. The registration desk opens Sunday afternoon (check the convention schedule for additional times).

I hold a first-time attendees meeting on Wednesday afternoon (June 1 this year) where I review the different aspects of the convention. I'll explain the different raffle tables and souvenir convention booklet, give insider tips for how to get the most from the convention and provide lots of time for you to meet other first timers and ask questions. Check for signs around the hallways and by the registration desk for the time and location.

Until then, feel free to contact me at auction@avsa.org with any questions.

Volunteers Needed for the 2023 Promotional Table

By Candace Baldwin Email: 2023Convention@avsa.org

The 2022 Convention kicks off the return of seeing our violet friends in person, wandering through the beautiful showroom and visiting the sales room (usually multiple times). We'll be exhausted at the end, full of wonderful memories and, before we know it, ready to start thinking about going to Atlanta, Georgia, in 2023.

Why do we want you thinking so far ahead? The 2023 promotional table is a raffle table to raise

funds for next year's convention. It's usually managed by the local affiliate club, but there isn't one for 2023. So, we're reaching out to ask for your help. We need raffle items and people to staff the 2023 promotional table at the 2022 convention. If you can help in any way, please send an email to 2023Convention@avsa.org.

Flashback: 2019 AVSA Convention

By AVSA Staff

Email: convention@avsa.org

For those of you who have never attended the AVSA Convention or need a refresher about how fun

they can be, here are photos from the 2019 gathering in Houston.





In Memory

Marie Montague

Marie Montague of South Dennis and Waltham, Massachusetts, passed away on February 20. She was 81. Marie was a long-time member of the Bay State African Violet Society and a founding member of the Emerald Necklace African Violet Club (which is currently inactive). She was remembered fondly by several Bay State AVS members.

Peg Crawford shared, “Marie was a gregarious and generous person who was always willing to share with others — be it her growing knowledge, plants from her own collection, or thoughts and recollections of the early days of the Bay State AVS. Marie’s beloved father, John Montague, had been a premier African violet grower when I first discovered Bay State AVS in the late 1970s. John had passed his extensive African violet growing knowledge on to his daughter, Marie, and she continued in his footsteps — winning many top prizes for her very large violets in our shows held at the old Waltham Field Station in the 1980s and 1990s.”

Nancy Manozzi’s memories of Marie also go back to the early 1980s. “I had recently joined All Seasons AVC and was encouraged to enter an African violet show. I was a total wreck packing my few entries up and bringing them to the Waltham Field Station as a first-time entrant. I was immediately met by Marie, with a smile and ‘Can I help you?’ She led the way, so to speak, and eased my fears.”

Bay State AVS member Cindy Brooks also met Marie for the first time at a show. “Marie Montague

stood out above everyone else because she touched me, literally, with her hands, pulling me into the special world of violets of which she was so enthralled. Right away she started talking about violets and her passion for growing them. It was kind of odd and I couldn’t walk away, mainly because she was holding my hands. So, I listened to her, and I learned. She wanted to help, encourage and share her knowledge and enthusiasm. She asked me what I wanted to grow but I was unsure. She immediately went to the member sales table and picked up bags of leaves she had labeled for sale and thrust them into my hands. Take these, she said, and that one too. You should definitely grow that one. No charge, she insisted. I remember the names of two of the leaves she gave me: Bonnie M and Major. These were plants hybridized by a member of Patriots AVC and Bay State AVS, the late Althea Major. Marie knew how important it was to continue to propagate these violets and perpetuate their legacy.

“I set those leaves and I successfully propagated enough plantlets that all the members of the Gateway African Violet Club could enter them for their club project the following year. It was a very rewarding experience and Althea’s daughter, Cheryl Major, was very pleased to see her mother’s plants grown and exhibited. Marie Montague helped make it happen.”



AV Creative Corner: “Dream AV” Coloring Challenge

By Rich Follett

Email: avcreativecorner@gmail.com

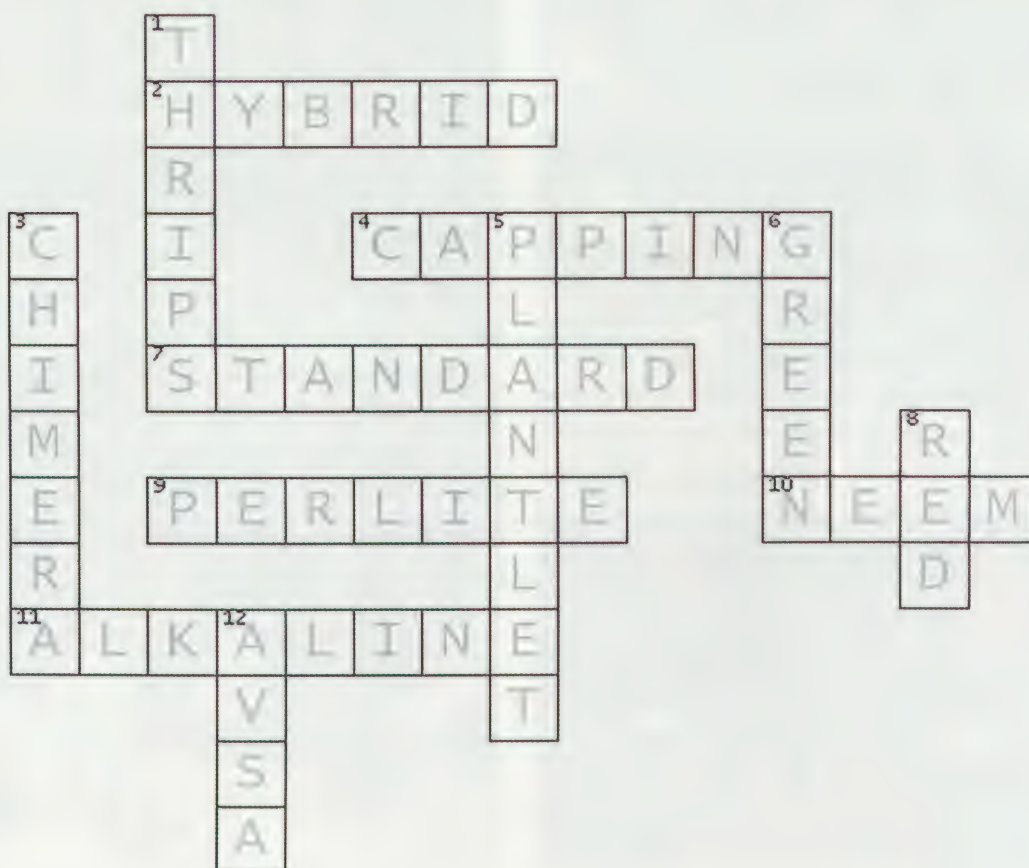
Every African violet enthusiast and/or hybridizer has a “dream violet” in mind — the AV we would love to see, if only it existed. AVSA member and talented artist Jann Selleck has created a piece of colorable art specifically for use by AVSA visionaries. This is your chance to go wild! Imagine the most sensational African violet you can possibly conjure up and then add color to make your dream a reality.

You may either color the picture on the next page; make a photocopy, then color and scan that; or make an electronic scan of the picture and use your tech skills to color it electronically. Crayons, colored pencils, markers, paint, pastels or any combination of coloring tools may be used.

Basically, any method that involves you letting your imagination run free, applying color to the image Jann created for us and submitting it to me in an email attachment with a minimum resolution of 300 dpi by May 31, 2022 is fair game for the coloring challenge.

The most beautiful and intriguing of your colored images will be published in a dream violet gallery in the September/October issue of *AVM*. Have fun. You don’t even have to color in the lines!

Below are the answers to the crossword puzzle submitted to the March/April *AVM* by Vicky Richard-Allen. Thanks, Vicky!



...the ...
...the ...
...the ...



Don't Just Grow African Violets — Crochet Them

By Sophia Bennett

Email: editor@avsa.org

Have you ever wanted to keep an African violet in a spot with no light or maintain its beautiful blooms without remembering to water? Is there someone in your life who would enjoy a colorful houseplant but isn't good at taking care of them?

An African violet made of yarn may be the answer. Several artists have created patterns for crocheted African violets that can be crafted by people with intermediate or advanced skills. I interviewed two designers to learn more about them and their passion for plants. The interviews have been edited.

June Gilbank

Planet June

www.planetjune.com



How did you get started with crochet?

In 2003, my husband and I moved from the U.K. to Canada for his work, and I had lots of time on my hands while I looked for a job. I picked up a crochet hook and a learn-to-crochet book and fell in love. A few years later, I heard about amigurumi (crocheted stuffed toys), but I didn't really like the style of any other amigurumi I'd seen, so I decided to try designing one of my own. When

I posted photos online, people started asking for the pattern, so I published my first pattern in January 2007. Then I designed another, and another, and people kept buying them, and things just grew from there. I quit my job to become a full-time crochet designer in 2009.



Crocheted African violets by June Gilbank.

What inspired you to design a pattern for African violets?

My designs are always inspired by nature, and after a few years of crocheting animals and flowers, I realized that I could crochet an entire plant — pot and all! An African violet seemed like the perfect candidate to crochet, with its compact form and distinctive and beautiful appearance.

I designed my African Violet pattern over 13 years ago, and it's always been special to me. African violets were my favorite houseplant, and this was my first design after I quit my day job and became a full-time crochet designer. I had such a great response to the pattern that I joked that I might be starting a trend for crocheting everlasting plants. Little did I know that would actually turn out to be true, and that my pattern would be a constant

bestseller and the start of one of my most popular pattern ranges.

Any tips for making this pattern?

My African Violet pattern includes two different sizes of plant and pot, and two different styles of flower. The single-colored flowers are slightly simpler to crochet and the small plant is much faster to complete, so if you're a beginner, I'd start with those options as your first project.

I intentionally make most of my designs simple enough that beginners can tackle them. However, if you've never made amigurumi before, you'll need to learn the magic ring technique. The tutorial on my website will show you exactly how to do it.

Do you grow African violets at home?

I've moved from country to country so many times that I gave up on keeping live houseplants and having to abandon them whenever we moved. That's one of the reasons that making life-size crocheted plants first appealed to me: I get to enjoy my favorite plants even when it's not practical to keep real ones. Crocheted plants never need watering, never die and are always in bloom!

Tatiana Vishnevsky

JeanKrisToys

jeankristoys.etsy.com



How did you get started with crochet?

When I was a little girl, I saw a woman who crocheted floral lace from airy pink yarn. I froze near her and could not take my eyes off this miracle. It

was fascinating to watch how the floral pattern was created from a simple thread. Since then, crocheting has become a great love in my life.

I am a journalist and graphic designer by profession. For most of my life, crocheting (and knitting) has been my hobby. The process of crocheting or knitting is an extraordinary pleasure and meditation. I crochet shawls, hats, toys and flowers and give them to various acquaintances and strangers. I want the person to smile and rejoice at such an unexpected gift — and possibly, after receiving such a gift, also want to do something good for someone so there is a little more goodness in the world.



Crocheted African violet by Tatiana Vishnevsky.

At some point, I realized that I wanted to share my knowledge and patterns with other people so they could create flowers and toys themselves and enjoy the process and the result. Now, I am a designer of crocheted toys and knitted accessories. My goal is to make crochet patterns as easy to use as possible so that a person following them enjoys the process.

Is your pattern intended for beginners or more advanced hobbyists?

The skill level is intermediate, but the pattern is written in such a way that beginning crocheters with knowledge of basic stitches can make it. The instructions are very easy to follow because they are accompanied by step-by-step photos.

Do you grow African violets at home?

I have little experience growing indoor flowers, but I do grow flowers in the garden, including lavender, asters, dahlias, lilies and geraniums.

Membership includes: Welcome package for new members; Quarterly issues of *Gesneriads*, the Journal for Gesneriad Growers; access to the Seed Fund; downloadable PDF copies of the journal



Bob Clark, Dept. AV
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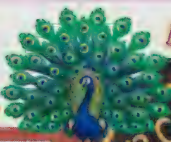
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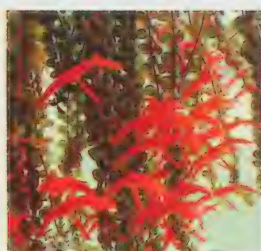
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African Violet

MAGAZINE



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Can My Violet Be Saved? P.24

Unusual Vessels for African Violets P.40

Report from the 2022 AVSA Convention P.52

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African Violet MAGAZINE

Volume 75 Number 4

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2022 AVSA Convention Best of Show

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African Violet Society of America

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Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.



President's Message

By Susan Anderson

Email: president@avsa.org

Three years — it's been three years! The fact that we had been apart that long kept running through my mind when I returned from AVSA's 76th Convention in Little Rock, Arkansas. To say we went "Hog Wild" is an understatement. It was an amazing experience full of fun, laughs, lots of hugs and plenty of catching up among friends. I felt extreme joy as I looked out over the sea of faces at the opening session. Our violet family had come back together again.

My sincere thanks to the Central Arkansas African Violet Society for hosting this year's convention. It will be one to remember. Seeing all the smiling, laughing faces and the showroom full of plants and designs were the highlights of the week for me. I am in awe of our many dedicated members who attend convention, bring their exhibits, participate in the programs and serve AVSA. I thank you all for contributing and making this year a success.

Thank you to all the exhibitors for sharing your plants and designs with us and congratulations to the winners. The showroom was filled with many exquisite exhibits, many of which are featured on pages 34 to 37. Meanwhile, the sales room was a feeding frenzy, nearly wiped out by the rush of shoppers when the doors opened. Demand was high for new plants.

This year, 190 registrants from near and far came to celebrate our beloved African violets. More than 40 registrants were first-time convention attendees. I enjoyed running into these newbies and asking how they were enjoying the week. Most had their hands full of plants or handouts from recent programs. They would smile broadly over their goods and excitedly tell me of their day. Now

that I think about it, everyone responded that way. Yes, everyone had a terrific time.

This year, 190
registrants came
to celebrate our
beloved African
violets at the AVSA
National Convention.

Congratulations to AVSA's Society Award winners, who are featured on page 6. We are grateful for your contributions to AVSA. If you wish to honor a deserving member for outstanding service to the society, please submit an award nomination via the website.

Congratulations and welcome to our newly elected Board members. AVSA's leadership looks forward to working with you and sharing ideas. The Nominating Committee this coming year will be soliciting applications for five Directors and Third Vice President. If you or someone you know is interested in serving AVSA in a leadership role, please complete an application, which can also be found on the website.

Now it is time to start planning to attend the 2023 AVSA National Convention in Atlanta, Georgia. Let's bring our violet family together and see where it all began. Get more details on page 50.

Happy growing, showing and sharing!



Editor's Notes

By Sophia Bennett

Email: editor@avsa.org

A few weeks ago, one of my African violets fell off a tall shelf and ended up scattered across my floor. Several leaves broke off, so the plant looked quite lopsided and sad. Instead of trying to salvage it, I put the best-looking leaves in a cup of water to start rooting and dumped the rest of the plant in the compost. It was disappointing but probably for the best. The plant had grown quite leggy and failed to bloom, so it was probably time to start over anyway.

While I was doing this, I was thinking about an article by Sharon Rosenzweig on page 26. In her latest 2022 Article Content entry, she discusses how our interest in hobbies sometimes waxes and wanes depending on what's happening in our lives or with our collections. Rather than allowing this accident to blunt my interest in my hobby, it may help it grow. This is the first time I've started leaves. If it works, my living room may soon hold several trays of baby African violets!

Sandra Skalski's latest contribution to the magazine (page 24), which talks about when and how to save struggling African violets, was also on my mind. She shares that if a plant came from a loved one or is special in some way, it's often worth trying to breathe life back into it. But, as she points out, there is no need to cause yourself undue stress by trying to save every plant. Sometimes restarting a plant or throwing it out is the best option.

I've heard great reports from this year's AVSA Convention in Little Rock. I hope everyone who attended had a wonderful time. For those who couldn't make it, we have lots of coverage in this issue. You can see several plants that won at this year's show beginning on page 34. Get a glimpse inside the event with our photo gallery on page 52, and view several of this year's new introductions throughout the magazine. Be sure to mark your calendar now for the 2023 convention, which will take place in Atlanta from May 28 to June 4.

African Violet Magazine Article and Column Deadlines

- January/February issue: November 1
- March/April issue: January 1
- May/June issue: March 1
- July/August issue: May 1
- September/October issue: July 1
- November/December issue: September 1

We would love to hear from you! Please send articles or article ideas for the *AVM* to Sophia Bennett at editor@avsa.org.



Photo credit: Marina Karpova

***Streptocarpus* 'MK-Kruzshevnoe Leto'**

2022 AVSA Convention Opening Ceremony New Introduction

Hybridized by: M. Karpova

Honoring Our 2022 Outstanding AVSA Members

By Linda Hall

Email: societyawards@avsa.org

AVSA would like to thank all the people who submitted nominations for AVSA's Annual Society Awards. This year, we had many qualified nominees, so the Awards Committee and Executive Committee had difficult decisions to make. We congratulate all the winners!

■ Hudson Award for Affiliate Leadership



Recipient: Kathy Lahti

This year, the Hudson Award for Affiliate Leadership goes to Kathy Lahti, a person who gives her all to any society she belongs to — and she belongs to many. Having been a member for more than 45 years, she

has served in every officer capacity multiple times, including as Show Chair, Newsletter Editor and Publicity Chair promoting her club. If she is asked to take on any responsibility, she says yes with a smile. At meetings, she is always up front to greet any new member.

Her ability and knowledge of growing and showing African violets is phenomenal. She is the all-time award winner of her club and willingly shares that knowledge with anyone who asks. She has given many programs over the years, as far back as 1979, and always brings plants and leaves to share with her audience. She is also an avid vegetable gardener and shares her harvest with club members.

She is a Master Judge and teacher. She has been a Director for AVSA and a Convention Show Chair. She is a charter member of the Lakes Area Violet Growers and AVSA Judges Council of Minnesota.

I can say without reservation that she is one of the top growers of African violets in this country and has been over the 30 years I have known her.

She is currently serving AVSA as Convention Chair, a position which she has held since 2006, and Nominating Committee Chair. She is a member of the Shows and Judges Committee, the Society Awards Committee and the Convention Manual Committee.

The African Violet Society of Minnesota is pleased to nominate Kathy Lahti for her decades of service to the society and AVSA is pleased to honor her with the 2022 Hudson Award for Affiliate Leadership.

■ Distinguished Service Award



Recipient: Anne Nicholas

AVSA is pleased to present a Distinguished Service Award to Anne Nicholas for her dedication to AVSA. Anne became Library Committee Chair in 2004. She has nurtured, expanded and modernized the

AVSA Library along her 18-year journey.

Nicholas is a Master Judge. She is a member of First African Violet Society of Denton and the Lone Star African Violet Council and has served both societies in many capacities. She is also a member of the Legacy Society.

Nicholas received an Honorary One-Year Membership in 2005 for her work on the Library Committee. In 2011, she received a Continuing Service Award for the modernization of the library programs, by taking them from slides that AVSA owned and rented to DVDs that clubs could individually purchase at an economical price. In 2020, she received a second Honorary One-Year Membership for being the 2019 co-chair of the Houston convention.

AVSA honors Anne Nicholas with a Distinguished Service Award for her dedication to AVSA.

■ Meritorious Service Award



Recipient: Janet Castiglioni

A Meritorious Service Award is presented to Janet Castiglioni for her years of dedication and service to AVSA. She served as a Director from 2012 to 2015. During that time, she served on several committees, including the Library Committee.

Castiglioni is a Senior Judge and a member of the Lone Star African Violet Council. She is the current president of the First African Violet Society of Denton.

AVSA thanks Janet Castiglioni and awards her with a Meritorious Service Award.

■ Honorary Life Membership



Recipient: Sue Ramser

Last year, AVSA honored Sue Ramser with an Honorary Life Membership. Ramser served this society for two years during one of the most difficult presidencies there has ever been. There were no in-person conventions or meetings. She conducted meetings via Zoom to move AVSA in a positive direction in the trying times of the pandemic. It was with a heavy heart that she had to deliver the news that not one, but two conventions were canceled. But she smiled and pushed AVSA forward with two virtual conventions and a new website, all while keeping a tight rein on our budget with help from the Executive Committee.

Ramser has been a member of AVSA for 50 years. She has served the society on many committees, as a Director, Secretary, Treasurer, 3rd Vice President, 2nd Vice President, 1st Vice President and President. She is a Life Member, Master Judge, teacher and member of the Legacy Society. In 1993, she compiled "Teaching Tools" for judges, which she and Dr. Barbara Pershing updated in 2013.

Locally, Ramser is a member of the First African Violet Society of Wichita Falls and has served in all the club's offices. She is also a member of the Lone Star African Violet Council and North Texas African Violet Judges Council, serving both councils in many capacities.

Ramser is a graduate of the University of North Texas, Denton and holds a Bachelor's degree in business administration. One of her other interests is genealogy, which led her to qualify for membership in the Daughters of the Republic of Texas and National Society Daughters of the American Revolution. And of course, her No. 1 other interest is her grandchildren. Just ask her!

Last year, Ramser received an Honorary Life Membership for her dedication and tenacity in leading AVSA as its President. This year, AVSA honors Sue Ramser with her past president's pin, which she did not receive last year because our convention was virtual. Congratulations!

■ Continuing Service Award



Recipient: Terri Post

This year, AVSA is pleased to present a Continuing Service Award to Terri Post for her many years serving this organization as its Finance Chair and Treasurer. She gives many hours to investing the Society's resources to ensure our future financial stability. She keeps a tight rein on the budget and files all taxes in a timely manner, along with providing the Executive Committee and Finance Committee with quarterly financial statements.

Post is a CPA and has been in the accounting industry for 33 years. She is a partner in a CPA firm in South Dakota that specializes in governmental and nonprofit auditing and tax return preparation. AVSA is so appreciative of her expertise in nonprofit organizations, which makes her the perfect treasurer.

Post is a member of the Missouri Valley African Violet Council and Lone Star African Violet Council. She is also a Senior Judge and member of the

Legacy Society. She lives in Sioux City, Iowa, with her husband, assorted animals and many, many African violets.

AVSA appreciates and acknowledges Terri Post's many years of continued service to the society.

■ Honorary One-Year Membership



Recipient: Jeri Anderson

AVSA is pleased to present Jeri Anderson an Honorary One-Year Membership for her many years of service as AVSA Affiliate Chair. She updates the website with current information about local affiliate officers and

when and where their clubs meet. She also updates the website with information about upcoming shows when the information is submitted to her. She then transfers that information to the *African Violet Magazine* Editor for publication in the magazine.

Anderson has been a member of the Tucson African Violet Society and AVSA since she started her journey with African violets.

AVSA is pleased to present Jeri Anderson with an Honorary One-Year Membership.



Recipient: Susan Anderson

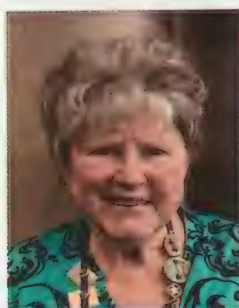
An Honorary One-Year Membership Award is presented to Susan Anderson for serving as the Convention Chair for the 2021 Cyber Diamond Celebration. Many volunteer hours were given to making this virtual con-

vention a reality. We were able to Zoom into meetings and presentations and have some "live" fun with African violet bingo, a live auction and the silent auction.

Anderson is President of AVSA and a member of the Fundraising Committee, Publications Committee and Shows & Judges Committee. She also compiles and writes the "Tally Time" column for the *AVM*. She is the Show Schedule Approver and has served AVSA as a Director.

Anderson is a charter member of the Copper State African Violet Club, which she helped found in 1997. She is also a Senior Judge.

It is with great pleasure that AVSA presents Susan Anderson an Honorary One-Year Membership.



Recipient: Marjorie Bullard

This year, AVSA would like to acknowledge the many years of service that Marjorie Bullard has given to AVSA. Bullard recently retired from the Library Committee, where she served many years as the main convention

photographer. She is also responsible for many of the photographs in First Class.

Bullard is a Senior Judge and has served AVSA as a Director twice, from 2004 to 2007 and from 2016 to 2019. She also received an Honorary One-Year Membership in 2013.

She is the current President of the First Austin African Violet Society and a member of Lone Star African Violet Council. She was also a charter member of Corpus Christi African Violet Society.

AVSA thanks Marjorie Bullard for her years of service to the society.



Recipient: Mary Corondan

AVSA is pleased to award an Honorary One-Year Membership to Mary Corondan for being the Convention Show Chair of the 2021 Cyber Diamond Celebration. The pandemic canceled our in-person convention for

the second year, but with determination and hard work, we had a virtual show that was beautiful. Corondan worked tirelessly encouraging AVSA members to contribute photographs of their plants. What a gorgeous virtual display she put together. She always goes above and beyond any task she undertakes with grace.

Corondan is AVSA's 1st Vice President. She chairs the Shows & Judges Committee and the Salary Committee. She is also a member of the Policies

and Procedures Committee and the Convention Show Awards Committee. She writes the "And the Winners Are ..." column for the *AVM*, which she has done for more than 25 years.

Locally, Corondan is a member of the Lone Star African Violet Council, First Nighter African Violet Society of Dallas and North Texas African Violet Judges Council. She is an AVSA Master Judge.

AVSA honors Mary Corondan with an Honorary One-Year Membership for her dedication in making the 2021 Cyber Diamond Celebration show a success.



Recipient: Lynn Lombard

AVSA honors Lynn Lombard with an Honorary One-Year Membership for serving as the Commercial Committee Chair from 2006 to 2021. She met with the commercials and heard their praises, innovations and

complaints. She handled all of them with grace. Lombard was the person that "let us in" to the sales room after giving us a mental map of where the various vendors were located in the sales

room. Then Lombard gave a 10-second countdown to those of us waiting in line before we entered through those magical doors that led to a buying frenzy.

Lombard joined AVSA in 1977 and is a Life Member. She was a Director from 1988 to 1991. She served as AVSA's 3rd Vice President from 1995 to 1997 and AVSA's 2nd Vice President from 1997 to 1999. She is a commercial member and the owner of the Velvet Leaf.

Lombard received previous Honorary One-Year Memberships in 1986, 1993 and 2010. She was co-registration chair for the Los Angeles convention in 1985 and the 2009 co-chair for the Reno, Nevada, convention.

Locally, Lombard has been a member of Tustana African Violet Society, Pamona Valley African Violet Society and African Violet Society of Southern California. She helped found the Foothill African Violet Society in 1983.

AVSA thanks Lynn Lombard for her years of service to AVSA.

Nominate a Member for the Hudson Award for Affiliate Leadership

By Linda Hall

Email: societyawards@avsa.org

Is there someone in your local African violet club who takes on every duty asked of them and goes above and beyond? We want to honor a special club member with the Hudson Award for Affiliate Leadership. AVSA presents this award annually at the national convention to one very deserving person. Please take the time

to complete a nomination form, which can be found on the AVSA website, www.africanviolet.societyofamerica.org.

If you have any questions or need assistance completing the form, please contact Linda Hall at societyawards@avsa.org or (816) 550-4061.



And the Winners Are ...

By Mary Corondan

Email: winners@avsa.org

■ African Violet Society of Minnesota, MN — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: Optimara Trinidad, Rhapsodie Ingrid, The Alps; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Fiddle Faddle, Ness' Mini Sota, Ness' Sno Fun; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Rob's Fiddle Faddle; Best Standard: Rhapsodie Ingrid; Best Miniature: Ness' Angel Babe; Best Trailer: Kathy's Blue Pony, **Kathy Lahti**.
- 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Ness' Sheer Peach, Optimara Little Blackfoot, Ness' Mini Sota, **Ken Rein**.
- Best Species: S. 5a clone *grandifolius* No. 237, **Carol Semrau**.
- Best Gesneriad: *Kohleria* 'Dark Velvet'; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Randy Deutsch**.

■ Albuquerque African Violet Club, NM — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: Calico Queen, Optimara Yellowstone, Moon Child; Best in Show/Best Standard: Cajun's Christy; Best Species: S. 5a clone *grandifolius* No. 299; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Dena Brent**.
- Best Semiminiature: Ness' Crinkle Blue; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* '3S-Fireflies at Dusk', **Sharon Shannon**.
- Best Miniature: Windsome, **Renee Bernard**.
- Best Design: Design Sweepstakes, **Shirley Tetreault**.

■ Central California African Violet Society, CA — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Nostalgia, Buckeye Cherry Topping, Buckeye Colossal, **Bill Novickas**.
- Best in Show/Best Miniature: Toronto Belle, **Mary Thompson**.
- Best Semiminiature: Hunter's Cabbage Goddess; Best Gesneriad: *Episcia* 'Blue Nile'; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Renee Wilson**.
- Best Standard: Tina's April Fantasy, **Diane Penders**.

- Best Trailer: Tiny Wood Trail; Best Species: S. 5c1 *ionanthus* ssp. *ionanthus* v. *ionanthus*, **Lola Sutherland**.

■ Copper State African Violet Club, AZ — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: Optimara Texas II, Optimara Monet, Rhapsodie Michelle II; Best Standard: Optimara Texas II; Best Species: S. 5h clone *rupicolus*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Paul Kilroy**.
- Best in Show/Best Miniature: Damas; Best Semiminiature: Spin-out; Best Trailer: Brazos Belle, **Shawn Edwards**.
- Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Leyla Blue', **Beverly Wombold**.

■ Evening African Violet Club of Des Moines, IA — Winners:

- Best in Show/Best Species: S. 5g clone *pendulus* var. *kizarae*; Best Trailer: Senk's Merlot, **Christine Ruggle**.
- Best Standard: Mary Craig; Best Miniature: Orchard's Bumble Magnet, **Terry Sprague**.
- Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* 'Naine Argente', **Mary Anne Upright**.
- Best Design, **Mary Jane Paez**.

■ First African Violet Society of Denton, TX — Winners:

- Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Hunter's Whitetail Fawn, Jolly Cutie Pie, Hunter's Chickadee Chirps; Best in Show/Best Miniature: Hunter's Chickadee Chirps; Best Standard: Amethyst; Best Semiminiature: Jolly Mischief; Best Trailer: RS-Zimnii Tsvetok; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Ann Athey**.
- Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Dale's Polar Blizzard', **Shelli McCauley**.
- Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Jill Reiss**.

■ Lakeshore African Violet Society, ON — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: Eskimo Kisses, Hunter's Muy Grande, Cajun's Maya; Best Standard: Hunter's Muy Grande, **Bruce Williams**.

- Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Optimara Little Omaha, Plumberry Glow, Little Pro; Best AVSA Species Collection: S. 5c1 clone House of Amani, S. 8 clone *rupicolus*, S. 5b clone *grotei* van Someren; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Morgan's Barossa; Best Miniature: Mac's Pure Poetry; Best Trailer: Beacon Trail; Best Species: S. 5c clone House of Amani; Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* 'Loki'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Beverley Williams**.
- Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Julie Thompson**.

■ Louisiana Lagniappe African Violet Society, LA — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: Cajun's Zydeco, Cajun's Hot to Trot, Cajun's Solaris; Best in Show/Best Standard: Cajun's Zydeco; Best Semiminiature: Jolly Jan; Best Trailer: RS-Zimnii Tsvetok; Best Species: S. clone *tongwensis* Uppsala 3397; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Belinda Thibodeaux**.
- 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Cajun's Just in Time, Cajun's Rum Boogie, Carolina Elegant Affair, **George Ramirez**.
- Best AVSA Species Collection: S. 5b clone *grotei* Silvert, S. 5f clone *orbicularis* var. *purpurea*, S. 5b clone *confusa* Mather E, **Wilhelmina Allen**.
- Best Miniature: Precious Red, **Laura Moser**.
- Best Gesneriad: *Chrysothemis pulchella* 'Bronze', **Robbie McMeel**.
- Best Design, **Susie Smith**.
- Design Sweepstakes, **Becky McMeel**.

■ Omaha African Violet and Gesneriad Society, NE — Winners:

- Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Peach, Jolly Butterfly, Jolly Star; Best Standard: Tina's April Fantasy; Best Species: S. 3 clone *shumensis* Mather EE, **Jennifer Vincent**.
- 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Hunter's Vixen, Irish Angel, Jolly Champ; Best in Show/Best Trailer: Rob's Jindalee; Best Miniature: Mac's Coral Carillon; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Linda Hall**.
- Best Semiminiature: Ness' Crinkle Blue, **Krissa Bruck**.
- Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Blueberry Butterfly', **Anthony Freedland**.
- Design Sweepstakes, **Randy Deutsch**.

■ Richmond African Violet Society, VA — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: Wild Irish Rose, Maggie Lee, Looking Glass; Best Semiminiature: Celina Dark Velvet; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Best Standard: Maggie Lee, **Barbara Greenawalt**.

- Best in Show/Best Trailer: Rob's Boolaroo; Best Miniature: Rob's Voodoo Blue; Best Species: S. 5c1 clone *tongwensis*, **Bill Schmidt**.
- Best Standard: **Vicki Carr**.
- Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia* hybrid, **Barbara Koski**.
- Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Barbara Stewart**.

■ Rocky Mountain African Violet Council, CO — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Too Tempting, Cajun's Slow Dance, Cajun's Ethereal Fairy; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Optimara Little Omaha, Winnergreen, Optimara Little Pueblo; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Deb Carnevale**.
- Best Standard: Tina's April Fantasy, **LeeAnn Thompson**.
- Best Semiminiature: Jolly Fireball; Best Miniature: Optimara Little Trio, **Melissa Shopnitz**.
- Best Trailer: S.5b clone *grotei* Silvert; Best Species: S. 5b clone *grotei* Silvert, **Susan Shaw**.
- Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'MC-Malvina', **Pat Eloe**.

■ Spring Branch African Violet Club, TX — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler, Mary Craig, Buckeye Nostalgia; Best in Show/Best Standard: Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler; Best Semiminiature: Eternal Orbit; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Wayne Geeslin**.
- Best Miniature: Hunter's Fawn Frolic, **Teresa Kaminski**.
- Best Trailer: Falling Snow, **Keitha Graves**.
- Best Species: S. 5b clone *grotei* Silvert; Best Gesneriad: *Primulina linearifolia*, **Dianne Duggan**.
- Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Elmer Godeny**.

■ Toronto African Violet and Gesneriad Society, ON — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: Hunter's Slippery When Wet, Buckeye Torch Song, Cajun's Maya; Best Standard: AE-Sharlene Romantic, **Bruce Williams**.
- Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Eyes, Red Bandito, Cool Blue; Best Miniature: Persian Lullaby; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Brett Flewelling**.
- 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Morgan's Barossa, Mac's Callow Fellow, Jolly Dear; Best AVSA Species Collection: S. 5c2 clone *diplotrichus* Uppsala 3084, S. 3 clone *shumensis* Mather EE, S. 5c1 clone *tongwensis*; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Hunter's Chipmunk Cheeks; Best Trailer: RS-Klad; Best Species: S. 5c1 clone *tongwensis*, **Beverley Williams**.
- Best Design, **Pierre Laforest**.

2022 Convention Judges' Breakfast Notes

By Sue Ramser

Email: pastpresident@avsa.org

At the annual Judges' Breakfast at the AVSA Convention, Mary Corondan, Shows & Judges Chair, announced the completion of the 2022 *AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges*. More information can be found in the Shows & Judges Column on page 14. It took many long hours to produce this updated version of the Handbook. Dianne Duggan's artwork is beautiful. Thank you to all who had a part in this publication.

Topics discussed included the change in number of years to become a Master Judge, continuing education for Master Judges and the expiration date of judging certificates. Further information can also be found in the Shows & Judges Column.

The Judges' Breakfast began with a game called Kahoot! This served as a fun icebreaker. There was a team from each table that competed for a prize of leaves from new Cajun's and Hunter's varieties. If more than one table had the correct answer, the team that gave the answer first scored higher. A good time was had by all.

As usual, members of the Shows & Judges Committee (Mary Corondan, Susan Anderson, Ron Davidson, Winston Goretsky, Susan Hill, Kathy Lahti and myself) answered a number of questions from judges. We are sharing that information here.

The 2022 Show Schedule has Class 63 and 64 for novelty or unusual foliage but I don't see how they will be judged.

A scale of points was distributed to judges for the unusual foliage class. Some local affiliates have this class in the schedule. When requested, Mary Corondan will send the scale of points for that class. The schedule approver will be allowing this in the future as long as it states there will be a

special scale of points distributed to the judges as is stated in the AVSA Convention Show Schedule.

Artificial turf may be used as a backdrop material in designs since it is not actually part of the design.

If a plant has a known sport and my plant shows those characteristics, can I ethically show it under the sport's name? Example: I have Rose Bouquet but it's blooming like Watermelon Snow. Another: I have Rebel's Splatter Cake but it looks like Rebel's Night Breezes.

There is a list of named sports on the AVSA website, and the plant should be entered as the named variety rather than "Sport of ____".

Please stress the importance of Story Cards, both from the Judge and Exhibitor perspective.

The Handbook encourages placing a card to help interpret and identify the plants used in a design. This card helps the public and judges clarify the exhibitor's interpretation of the design.

Can artificial turf be used as a backdrop material since it is not actually part of the design?

Yes, it may be used.

In an unusual container, how many points should be deducted for use of sphagnum moss to cover the soil?

It should not be used. It would be eliminated from consideration because it is additional plant material. Unusual containers are not designs and top dressing is not allowed. This came up as an example in the judging school of what not to do.

Suggestion: The Handbook should be clearer about separating hanging arrangements from kinetics. Also, I have never been to a judging school where hanging arrangements were explained, although kinetics always have been.

Page 66 in the Handbook defines hanging arrangements this way: "Hanging flower or plant arrangements are arrangements that are suspended in air, either from a dowel or bracket on the back of the niche or from an eye screw if a frame is used, which may or may not have motion. If the arrangement is to have motion, it will be viewed from all sides. The schedule should state whether the design is to be stationary, moving, or exhibitor's choice."

How should a judge point score a standard over 12 inches? These standards that are 12+ inches across need to have 100+ blooms if we state a small standard only needs 10 to 25. Is it all about proportion and if the plant is in balance?

The math approach would be used. So, if a panel says it needs 200 blossoms and it only has 100, the panel would take off 50% or 12.5 points. Each leaf axel produces a bloom stalk. It will indicate whether the plant is in full bloom. Knowing a variety will give an indication of whether it is in full bloom or not. It would also depend on the size of the blossoms — large blossoms may not be as numerous sometimes. This also depends on the size of the leaves and the number of leaves. Points would be deducted accordingly.

A semiminiature plant was given no award because it did not have white edges on the blossoms. On P.53 of the new Handbook, it says if all blossoms are not the correct color, 10 points will be taken off. This would give

it a red ribbon. The plant was very nice otherwise. There was no way there would be another 20 points taken off to make no award. Aren't the judges supposed to follow the rules? It seems totally unfair to the exhibitor.

Ten points are deducted under "color of blossom" if no blooms are true to the variety. Ten points is the maximum number of points to be deducted for color of blossom. If a few blossoms are not blooming true to the variety, 1/2 point shall be deducted for each incorrect blossom. If the description is variable, points would not be deducted. For heavily blooming varieties with 100 blossoms, taking 1/2 point per blossom could also deduct 10 points. Shows & Judges will address this since some of the blooms on such a plant could be true to the variety.

What is the rule about plant material being required in blossom designs? Is it required other than the violet blossom?

No, it isn't required.

What do you do when judging an African violet show education table which is all about gesneriads and it only says African violets are in the same family?

No award should be given. Page 73 in the 2022 Handbook, under Education and AVSA Information Exhibits, lists everything to be included. It states, "In addition to the culture and propagation of African violets, information on other gesneriads can be included in the exhibit ..." It would be eliminated from consideration. It could be done as a second education table in addition to one about African violets.

Is there a way to let clubs know that a judge is willing to travel to judge?

The judge can send an email to judges@avsa.org if they would like their contact information added to the AVSA Judges List on the website.

Thank you to Paul Kroll, who originated the Judges' Breakfast Notes several years ago. Paul was unable to attend convention this year but we are glad we can continue this popular tradition.



Shows and Judges

By Mary Corondan

Email: judges@avsa.org

The AVSA Convention and Show in Little Rock was phenomenal! Not only were the show plants gorgeous, but the designs were so creative and plentiful. The best part was how wonderful it was to see everyone again. Danny Tidwell, Alice Brown and their committee chairs did a superb job running a well-organized convention and show.

The *AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges* was a big success. Winston Goretsky, Handbook Chair, formatted the book and Dianne Duggan contributed lovely illustrations. Barbara Werness and Paul Kroll served on the Revision Committee and Sharon Shannon and Ruth Loomis were proofreaders. We owe a debt of gratitude to all of them for their dedication to producing a quality Handbook. If you have not yet done so, order yours today on the AVSA website.

Expiration of judging certificates for all student and advanced judges will be June 15, 2025. If you have not yet earned blue ribbons when you take the judging school, proof of blue ribbons may be presented to your teacher up to one calendar year after taking the judging exam.

Those taking the Senior Judge's exam, who must meet the proof of blue ribbons and signed show schedule requirements, must do so beginning May 1, 2025. Some of these requirements had been waived or modified during the pandemic.

The continuing education requirement for Master Judges will begin in 2023. Every three years, a Master Judge must do one of these things to keep current on their certification:

1. Audit a judging school.
2. Attend a continuing education Zoom meeting.
3. Take a Senior Judge's exam and return it to the Senior Judge Examiner.

4. Take a short, written test on judging practices and changes that have transpired.
5. Teach a judging school.

A lottery will determine which Master Judges will need to meet the continuing education requirement in 2023, 2024 and 2025. Master Judges will be notified of their due date in August 2022.

A lottery will determine which Master Judges will need to meet the continuing education requirement in 2023, 2024 and 2025. Master Judges will be notified of their due date in August 2022. Those who do not meet that requirement will automatically be moved to Master Judge Emeritus status. They will remain a Master Judge Emeritus until the continuing education condition is met and will then be returned to Master Judge status. If a Master Judge wishes, the continuing education obligation may be completed earlier than the due date.

More information from the convention will be in the Shows & Judges column in the September/October issue. Until then, happy growing!



Photo credit: Belinda Thibodeaux

Cajun's Heart and Soul

2022 AVSA Convention Opening Ceremony New Introduction

Hybridized by: B. Thibodeaux
Standard



Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

Email: registration@avsa.org

■ Jere Trigg — Spanish Fort, AL

Jere's Azure Sky

- (11342) 02/07/2022 •(J. Trigg)
- Single medium blue frilled sticktite pansy/darker eye.
- Dark green, heart-shaped, quilted, glossy, serrated. •Large

Jere's Big Blue Bomber

- (11343) 02/07/2022 •(J. Trigg)
- Single lavender large sticktite star/darker eye.
- Dark green, heart-shaped, quilted, glossy, serrated/red back. •Large

Jere's Cranberry Spinner

- (11344) 02/07/2022 •(J. Trigg)
- Single chimera white frilled star/cranberry stripe and band, white edge.
- Dark green, heart-shaped, pointed, quilted, glossy, serrated. •Standard

Jere's Kaleidoscope

- (11345) 02/07/2022 •(J. Trigg)
- Single purple large sticktite star/pink puff fantasy.
- Medium green, spooned, pointed, quilted, glossy, serrated. •Standard

Jere's Lazy Day

- (11346) 02/07/2022 •(J. Trigg)
- Single-semidouble purple large star/pink-white puff fantasy.
- Medium green, heart-shaped, quilted, serrated. •Standard

Jere's Pink Prolific

- (11347) 02/07/2022 •(J. Trigg)
- Single pink two-tone large star/white edge.
- Dark green, quilted, glossy, serrated/red back. •Standard

Jere's Primrose Lane

- (11348) 02/07/2022 •(J. Trigg)
- Semidouble lavender-pink pansy.
- Dark green, ovate, quilted, glossy, serrated/red back. •Large

Jere's Starburst

- (11349) 02/07/2022 •(J. Trigg)
- Single chimera white large star/purple stripe, purple and white frilled edge.
- Dark green, heart-shaped, quilted, glossy, serrated. •Standard

Jere's Tropical Delight

- (11350) 02/07/2022 •(J. Trigg)
- Single coral pansy.
- Medium green, heart-shaped, serrated. •Large

Jere's Vertigo

- (11351) 02/07/2022 •(J. Trigg)
- Single chimera purple star/white stripe, purple band, white edge.
- Medium green, heart-shaped, quilted, serrated. •Standard

■ Belinda Thibodeaux — Patterson, LA

Cajun's Gilded Strawberry

- (11352) 02/14/2022 •(B. Thibodeaux)
- Single raspberry ruffled sticktite star/thin dark raspberry edge.
- Variegated medium green and white, quilted. •Standard

Cajun's Heart and Soul

- (11353) 02/14/2022 •(B. Thibodeaux)
- Single-semidouble dark red frilled pansy.
- Variegated medium green and white, serrated. •Standard

Cajun's Hot to Trot

- (11354) 02/14/2022 •(B. Thibodeaux)
- Single fuchsia sticktite pansy/variable thin white edge.
- Variegated dark green and white, plain, heart-shaped, quilted. •Standard

Cajun's Solaris

- (11355) 02/14/2022 •(B. Thibodeaux)
- Semidouble purple ruffled star/pink-white puff fantasy, thin dark purple edge.
- Variegated dark green and cream, quilted, serrated. •Standard

■ Phisit Chaipradermsak — Chiang Mai, Thailand

Lip's Lala Dapon

- (11356) 03/04/2022 •(P. Chaipradermsak)
- Single-semidouble chimera white pansy/blue stripe.
- Medium green, plain, quilted. •Semiminiature

Lip's Lapas

- (11357) 03/04/2022 •(P. Chaipradermsak)
- Single-semidouble chimera blue pansy/white stripe.
- Medium green, plain. •Semiminiature

■ Karin Dean Black — Lexington, NC

KD's Fallen Star

- (11358) 03/08/2022 •(K. Dean Black)
- Single chimera white pansy/lavender-purple stripe.
- Variegated light green and white, pointed.
- Miniature

Coming Events

Check the AVSA Events page (www.africanviolet.societyofamerica.org/events), search the local club

■ September 10-11 — Wisconsin

Wisconsin Council of African Violet Clubs
Show and Sale

St. Jude the Apostle Church Hall

531 Knapp St.

Oshkosh, WI

Saturday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Sunday: 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

Kevin Degner: kevindegner7@yahoo.com

■ September 16-17 — Ohio

Ohio State African Violet Society
Show and Sale

Kingwood Center Gardens

50 N. Trimble Road

Mansfield, OH

Friday and Saturday: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Mel Grice: melsgrice@gmail.com

www.osavs.org

on Facebook or contact the organizers listed below for the latest information on these events.

■ September 17 — California

Delta Gesneriad and African Violet Club

Plant Sale and Display

Shepard Garden and Arts Center

3330 McKinley Blvd.

Sacramento, CA

Saturday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m. or until all plants are sold

Kathy Gunther: kathleenmgunther@gmail.com

Bev Moon: bev@mcclure.org

■ October 1-2 — Minnesota

North Star African Violet Council

Show and Sale

Bachman's Floral, Gift and Garden

6010 Lyndale Ave. S.

Minneapolis, MN

Saturday: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Sunday: 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

Mary Kealy-Falk: mkealyfalk@aol.com

Violets Most Wanted List

By Mary Thompson

Email: preservingviolets@avsa.org

We'll be getting ready for the holidays before you know it. At this time of the year, it is still too hot to ship to most areas of the country and pretty soon, it will be too cold. Regardless, there is a window between now and then to ship.

This month, I have listed all of the African violets being requested on our list. If you have a variety you are willing to share, please fill out the form at www.africanvioletsofamerica.org and submit it to the Violet Preservation Committee.

Admiral (pre-1947)	Georgia Lover (1985)	Old Dominion Sparkler (1984)
Alamo Red (1985)	Happy Harold (1971)	Optimara Crater Lake (1987)
Alamo Haven (1994)	Helen Van Pelt Wilson (1957)	Optimara Molokai (1987)
Amethyst (pre-1947)	His Promise	Picasso (1988)
Ask Neva (1982)	Irresistible (1982)	Pink Beauty (date unknown)
Bagdad (not in AVSA database)	Kaneland Beauty (1969)	Plum Tip (1964)
Bryte Pixie (1985)	Kira (1976)	Rhapsodie Marilyn I (1987)
Buckeye Blithe Spirit (1997)	Lilian Jarrett Supreme (1961)	Rhapsodie Marilyn II (1995)
Buckeye Crackerjack (2001)	Little Emily (2001)	Sailor Boy (pre-1947)
Buckeye Eyestopper (2012)	Lonestar Lady (2006)	Siberian Moon (1996)
Buckeye Freckles Galore (2008)	Lonestar Snowstorm (2006)	Southern Delight (2003)
Buckeye Gee Whiz (not registered)	Maas Janet (1981)	Suncoast Calypso
Chanticleer (1963)	Maas' Sashah (1988)	Teen Craze (1987)
Commodore (pre-1947)	Masked Man (1982)	Teen Dream (1989)
Creekside Moonbeams (not in AVSA database)	Melodie Kimi (1994)	Teeny Weeny (1978)
Denver Doll (1957)	Maple Sugar (1966)	Tipt (date unknown)
David Lee (1978)	Mauna Loa (1983)	Tooch (1989)
Dorlene (1950)	Midget Bon Bon (1972)	Young Man's Fancy (1989)
Fantasy Florale (1989)	Mosaique	Viking (pre-1947)
Friend Phyllis (1988)	Norseman (pre-1947)	White Lady (date unknown)
	#32	White Pride Supreme (1957)
	Ocean Eyes (1992)	

Growing Tip

"I used to rotate fertilizers, thinking that what one fertilizer didn't have, the next would. I have changed my approach now and use only the

general-purpose fertilizer (20-20-20) with wonderful results. My blooms are larger and the plants grow very well." —Paul Kroll



Photo credit: Daria Lyagina

DV-Nastupaet Noch'

2022 AVSA Convention Opening Ceremony New Introduction

Hybridized by: D. Lyagina
Standard



In Search of New Violets

By Dr. Jeff Smith

Email: jsmith4@bsu.edu

One of the nice things about African violets is that they sport (mutate) on a regular basis, which has resulted in a large number of new traits in the plants. The disadvantage of sporting is that it can be frustrating to consistently reproduce plants that are true to type. Many growers are aware that fantasy flowers and chimeras have a reputation for genetic instability, so reproducing them true to type can be frustrating. This is also why it's not a good idea to purchase a small plant of fantasy and chimera cultivars until it has flowered, proving it is blooming true.

Several questions in this column deal with the idea of genetic stability and taking a sport through three generations. I've added a little twist to the three-generation idea by suggesting that multiple plants of generations two and three help provide evidence if a sport really is genetically stable. See if these examples help those of you evaluating new sports in understanding the process of testing for genetic stability.

Q: A plant of Broadway Star Trail (white flowers with pink centers, light green leaves) appears to have sported to solid pink flowers with burgundy leaves. Is this a new plant or sport?

A: What I suspect has happened is that the plant has started to express the red leaf backing trait and is producing red pigment in the lower epidermis of the leaves. This will darken the color of the leaves from light green to burgundy. The expression of the red leaf backing trait also darkens the flower color — in this case, changing the color from mostly white to pink. Similar mutations or sports in leaf and flower color have been seen in other cultivars.

If the three generations appear identical, we assume that the new sport is stable and can be released under a new name.

Anyone with a possible new sport should check with Joe Bruns, AVSA's Registration Chairman, to see if a sport has been reported for an existing cultivar. I checked with Joe and there is not a similar mutation or sport for Broadway Star Trail. This may be a brand-new sport, but you need to check for genetic stability by doing a three-generation test. The original sport is generation one. Leaf cuttings from the sport produce generation two. Leaf cuttings from generation two produce generation three. You do not have to wait until the generation two plants are mature to start leaf cuttings for generation three. When all three generations are blooming, compare them side by side. Ideally, there should be little difference between the plants (except perhaps for maturity and size). If the three generations appear identical, we assume that the new sport is stable and can be released under a new name. Joe Bruns can give you guidelines on the rules for naming a sport.

I would also suggest growing out several plants of generations two and three. Having multiple plants of each generation that all look the same

strengthens the claim for genetic stability. It will also give you several plants of your new cultivar to release and share with others.

Q: I have a plant that is registered for semi-double flowers. However, a plantlet has appeared that has consistently produced full double flowers. Could this be a new sport?

A: The writer of this question had already started testing for genetic stability when I was contacted. Generation two had produced full double flowers and they were waiting on the outcome for several plants of generation three. The writer later reported that all generation two and three plants had full double flowers, even as young plants.

Since some cultivars produce semi-double flowers in their first blooms and change to double flowers as the plant matures, the ability to produce full doubles in the first bloom supports that this is a new sport. This example also demonstrates why producing multiple plants of generation two and three is very important to the process of checking for genetic stability. When all plants show the new trait (e.g., double flowers), the odds are much improved for the stability of the new sport.

The plant in question has coral-colored flowers. Having a new sport with full double coral-colored flowers is a welcome addition to the coral family of cultivars and a nice improvement from the original plant.

Q: I like flowers with green edges. Any suggestions for breeding for this trait?

A: I haven't seen good data on the inheritance of green edges, but I would treat the trait as a genetic dominant and see if you can get it to express in the first generation of seedlings. There are reports that green edges on flowers is temperature dependent, with the trait having best expression when grown cool and disappearing when grown warm. You may need to keep your seedlings on the cooler side to see if any have inherited the trait.

Some edge traits also show "dose" inheritance patterns — that is, plants that are homozygous (two copies) have better expression of the trait

than plants that are heterozygous (one copy). Using parents that both show green edges on the flowers should produce some offspring that are double dose or homozygous. This double dose may allow the seedlings to show better expression of green edges under different growing temperatures.

Q: Does yellow pigment in African violet flowers always distort the petal shapes? If so, how can we breed for yellow color and normal petals together?

A: It is true that many of the early cultivars with yellow color had distorted petals. It seemed that switching on the genes for yellow color pulled something away from normal petal growth. However, many of the newer cultivars with yellow color appear to have normal petals. I have noticed that many of the newer yellow-colored cultivars also have double petals. Perhaps by keeping plants with double petals, hybridizers have selected around the petal distorting factor. In any event, we'll need to see if yellow color can be expanded to other petal types, such as singles and semi-doubles, to check if petal distortion remains a problem with this color.

Q: If I cross a star-shaped thumbprint flower with a yellow-flowered plant, is it possible to get a thumbprint pattern with a yellow center?

A: What an interesting idea. I suspect that the white center of a star-shaped thumbprint flower is unable to produce any pigment at all. Remember that white isn't actually a pigment in African violet flowers; it's the lack of all pigments. Therefore, the thumbprint pattern should trump other colors and keep the center white. Geneticists call the ability of one trait to cover up the expression of another epistasis. I would expect the thumbprint pattern would be epistatic to yellow flower color.

Having said this, there is good evidence that yellow pigment in African violets follows a separate pigment production pathway than the traditional colors such as pink and blue. There is also a noticeable tendency for yellow flowers to show their best pigmentation in the center of the flower with less expression of pigment toward the petal

edges. Therefore, it is possible that thumbprint pattern and yellow pigments might interact differently than expected, perhaps producing a thumbprint pattern with a yellow center.

The only way to know for sure is to try this cross and see what happens with the offspring. Try crossing a good star-shaped thumbprint with a star-shaped yellow-flowered plant. Star-shaped flowers are recessive and will breed true when crossed with themselves. If you have space, try growing out many seedlings, as the proper combination of traits could be rare and missed in a small sample size. Good luck with this cross. I hope you will be able to report back some success with this idea.

Q: I've seen the traditional colors for African violets listed as white, pink, fuchsia and blue. Where does lilac flower color fit in?

A: Lilac flower color can be the result of several different things. I've seen some very pale blues and fuchsia plants that have been described as lilac, so the color can be a pale dilution of these

primary pigments. Lilac can also be a blend of the pink and blue pigments. Flowers that are a darker shade of lilac are likely to be this type of blend. There may be some additional combinations of pigments that give lilac, but I doubt there is a separate pigment in African violets that gives the color.

Q: I really like large plants. Would it be helpful to use any of the species in my crosses to get larger plant size?

A: One of the largest-growing species is *S. rupicolus* cl. Robertson. Not only does this clone produce very large plants, but hybrids with this species also inherit the large plant size. One hybridizer has been working with this species in their crosses, and they have produced some very nice, large plants. Try crossing some of the best large-leaved cultivars with this species. The flowers will probably be blue because species lack the other flower colors, but I could see getting to an F2 generation of large-growing plants in a multitude of flower colors using this species.

Growing Tip from Paul Kilroy

"When I root a leaf that sends up a big bunch of babies (or even if there are only a few) and it's potting-on time, I remove the rooted leaf from its growing cup, loosen the soil a bit, lightly grasp all the new plantlets with the fingertips of one hand and then carefully 'unzip' the original leaf from the entire cluster of plantlets with the other hand. The reason I do this is that I find it easier to separate the individual plantlets one from the other with less likelihood of damaging them."

"Dry cleaner bags can be the vacationing plant grower's best friend. If you have to be away from

your collection for a week or two or more, I suggest using one of those thin plastic bags that dry cleaners use to enclose your freshly cleaned garments. They are gossamer light and will not lay heavily on even your most fragile plants, and they are big enough to enclose an entire tray of plants for those of you who grow on light stands. You'll have to seal both ends once you've got your plants carefully situated inside, but once that is done, they can hold plants in good shape for a good while."



Photo credit: Tatiana Pugacheva

**PT-
Akvamarinovye Sny**

**2022 AVSA Convention
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Hybridized by: T. Pugacheva
Standard



Photo credit: Natalia Skorniakova

RM-Vivat, Korol'!

**2022 AVSA Convention
Opening Ceremony
New Introduction**

Hybridized by: N. Skorniakova
Standard

My First Violets: Can My Violet Be Saved?

By Sandra Skalski

Email: publications@avsa.org

Yesterday, your favorite African violet was beautiful; today, it sits limp in its pot, barely clinging to life. Can it be saved? Hopefully, yes. Many violet problems are easy to solve.

But before we discuss how to save the plant, let's see if we should try to save it at all. Hopeless cases exist and the trash can is your friend. Here are the plants you shouldn't try to save:

- Plants that are not yet yours. Please leave those sad sacks on the shelf at the big box store. You may be able to save them, but more than likely, you'll regret trying. In addition to neglect, those plants have possibly been exposed to pests and diseases from indoors and outside. Don't risk taking home something that could infect the rest of your plants.
- Plants that are too far gone. If they're crispy or mushy, they're done.
- Plants with problems that require the use of pesticides and you're not willing to use them.

Plants worth saving include:

- Plants with easy-to-fix problems.
- Sentimental plants (your grandma's plant).
- Rare or hard-to-replace varieties.
- Plants you can't bear to lose.

Ready to rescue that plant? Let's look at the most common problems and how to fix them. Carefully examine your plant and jot down your observations.

Potting Problems

Have you repotted the African violet recently? Sometimes a plant can go into shock after repotting. If you slip it into a zippy bag, it may perk up.

Perhaps you haven't repotted it in over a year. Over time, the soilless mix breaks down and becomes more acidic. Fertilizer salts build up. Repot your

plants at least once a year and twice a year if you're feeling ambitious.

Remember: If you've tried to revive a plant and were not successful, it's OK to use the trash can.

Is your plant still in the soil it came in when you bought it? Commercial growers use a potting mix that works for their conditions. The plants in the big box stores are in a heavy mix that holds lots of water since the plants are unlikely to get watered on the shelves.

It's always a good idea to repot your new plants in a mix that works for your conditions. Pots too large for the plant size and root ball make rot problems more likely. Most standard-size plants do well in pots 4 inches in diameter or less. Miniatures and semiminiatures are best in 2- to 2 1/2-inch pots. Leave those 5- and 6-inch pots to the show growers who want large specimens.

Watering Problems

Pick up the pot. Is it heavy for its size or very light? Limp, droopy leaves can be a sign of over and underwatering. Stick your finger into the soil about an inch. Does it feel damp or dry? If it is dry, your violet may be underwatered. If it has recently gone dry, water it lightly. As the leaves perk up, add a bit more water until the plant is completely hydrated and the leaves are firm. If it's been dry for

a while, you need to rehydrate very slowly. The delicate roots have probably dried up and adding a lot of water will cause root rot. Use a squirt bottle to add a bit of water every few hours. A sealed zippy bag can help improve the humidity.

What if the soil feels moist but the plant is limp? Your plant may be overwatered instead of under-watered. Overwatering causes the demise of many violets. Tap the plant out of the pot and examine the root ball. Are there white roots or are they brown and mushy? Brown and mushy roots are a sign of root rot. Sometimes the crown of the plant will break off completely from the roots. Cut away all of the rotted portions and the worst of the limp leaves. Repot in fresh soil and put the plant in a zippy bag until it gets roots, which should take about two weeks. Take a healthy leaf to start a new plant in case the plant doesn't recover.

Pest Problems

Are there obvious signs of pests or disease? Some parasitic fungi can cause crown rot and need to be treated with an appropriate fungicide. Other fungi can cause mushy or dried outer leaves. A deep discussion on these diseases is beyond the scope of this article. It is difficult to distinguish many of these fungi on African violets, so if you aren't sure, consider getting your plant analyzed so that you use the appropriate fungicide.

One fungus is easy to identify. If your leaves and blossoms are covered with a white powder, you have powdery mildew. Temperature changes can bring this on and so can a lack of air circulation. The fungus grows into the plant tissue, so it can't be washed away. Fortunately, it is easily treated with Immunox at 1/8 teaspoon in 12 ounces of water. Discard the blossoms and spray with the Immunox solution every few days until the mildew is gone.

Soil mealy bugs are common, and you can actually have an infected plant and not know it for quite some time. Look for small white insects; white, waxy deposits in the root ball; and a lack of healthy white roots. Once the number of insects goes up, you'll see adverse effects on the plant, including dull foliage, limp leaves and little to no roots. You can treat soil mealy bugs with a systemic insecticide, but it is much easier and more effective to restart the plant from a crown or leaf. Be sure no mealy bugs have crawled into the bottom petioles near the crown. Swish the leaf or crown in insecticide, pot it in a clean pot with fresh soil and slip the pot into a zippy bag for a couple weeks.

Remember: If you've tried to revive a plant and were not successful, it's OK to use the trash can. African violets can be replaced, and sometimes the stress of trying to save the worst ones isn't worth it.

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Wax and Wane

By Sharon Rosenzweig

Email: srosenzw100@comcast.net

Most things in nature are in a continual state of change — the phases of the moon, the tides, the seasons. I've discovered that enthusiasm for a favorite hobby can also wax and wane. Growing African violets lends itself to a cycle of changing feelings ranging from depression to euphoria.

We have all felt the excitement when baby plants develop from a mother leaf, the satisfaction of growing a show-worthy plant and the devastation of losing plants to mites or root rot. There is a whole range of emotions in between — disappointment when your plants are not doing well, relief when a sickly plant recovers and many more.

It's easy to maintain a constant level of motivation when all is going well and your plants look great. But what happens when something changes or starts to go wrong? You may experience a change in family or work environment that takes up a lot of your time and energy. Your growing environment may have changed and the plants are showing stress. It is only natural for your enthusiasm to wane in response to these events.

My experience of growing African violets for more than 40 years has brought me much joy and pride, some disappointment and a lot of curiosity. Why are my centers tight? Why are my plants smaller than they should be? Why are the leaves turning bronze? Most of the time, my enthusiasm had remained fairly constant. Then something happened.

We went away on vacation for a week in May. Most of my plants were in Oyama Planters (self-watering) or on wicks. I made sure the reservoirs were filled with water before we left. All of my plants were grown in the basement with a heater set to 75 degrees F. But I didn't want to leave the heater running while no one was home, so I shut it off.

Unfortunately, we had a cold snap and the temperature in the plant room was 59 degrees F the day we got home. Because the air temperature was cold, the water in the reservoirs got cold and my plants developed cold water spots all over the leaves. Also, the temperature fluctuated more than 10 degrees when the fluorescent lights went on and off. To sum it up, the plants were very unhappy and so was I.

I put off dealing with the problem plants for a while. Was it possible that my enthusiasm for my beloved hobby had waned? Yes, it had. I resigned myself to the fact that I would not have anything show worthy for the next virtual or in-person show because it would take forever for the culture break and leaf spots to grow out.

About a month passed. Then, one evening, I went online to some of the African violet sites and saw amazing, huge plants with gigantic heads of bloom. I had an epiphany! Now, with renewed energy and motivation, I vowed to regenerate my collection and try to grow a large standard African violet.

The first thing I did was take all my plants off the light stands and thoroughly wash the shelves and trays. Before putting any plant back, I examined it. Was it healthy looking? Did I really like it? If the answer was no, I either tossed it or took a leaf to restart it.

I did some research on tight centers and bronze leaves and finally realized (after 40 years) that my standard African violets were too close to the lights. I rearranged two shelves on each light stand to accommodate the standards at the proper height of at least 10 inches. I also placed small pieces of paper towel over the tight crowns in the hope they would loosen up. My semiminis

and minis were about seven inches from the lights on the other shelves.

I started to see some positive changes in the plants and, as a result, a lot of positive changes in my attitude. So, my message is that it is natural for your level of enthusiasm for growing to change as your life or plant situation changes. Don't feel

guilty about neglecting your plants for a while. Step back, take a break and just go with the flow. Join an online African violet chat group or call one of your grower friends for encouragement. Your energy and motivation will soon return and you can get ready for the next round of growing ups and downs.

2022 Article Contest—

Let There Be Light: The Challenge of Growing in Natural Light

By Sharon Rosenzweig

Email: srosenzw100@comcast.net

I have always grown African violets in natural light. The growing area in my first house received morning sun. The next house was shaded and had very little sunlight. My current house has nothing but sun. As you would expect, my African violets did best in the location with morning sun.

Growing African violets in natural light causes one to be preoccupied with the daily weather report. The overriding questions I found myself faced with each morning were, will it be sunny today and do I raise the cellular shades or leave them lowered? Then there were the quirky days when it was raining in the morning and the sun came out full force in the afternoon!

Growing in natural light can produce a myriad of problems:

- Burn spots on leaves and flowers
- Bleached leaves and flowers
- Small flowers
- Tight centers
- Phototropism (growing toward the source of light)
- Problems with symmetry (the leaves that receive more light will grow faster and larger)

On the positive side, there are no timers to worry about, no ugly stands in your house and no fluorescent tubes to replace.

So, if you have no space for light stands or find them unattractive, you can still have success growing in natural light if you follow some simple rules.

- If possible, select a window that receives morning sun or has a tree outside to gently filter the sun.
- For southern or western exposures, use light-filtering curtains or shades on bright, sunny days. Raise or open them on rainy, cloudy days. Beware of those aforementioned quirky days.
- Cut back on fertilizer during the hottest summer months.
- Be extra careful not to get water droplets on leaves to prevent burn spots.
- Rotate the plants one-quarter turn in the same direction every week to maintain symmetry.

Epilogue: After having outgrown my windowsill space, I progressed to fluorescent light stands in the basement. My next foray is going to be into the world of LED lights.



Photo credit: Svetlana Repkina

RS-Poberezh'e

2022 AVSA Convention Opening Ceremony New Introduction

Hybridized by: S. Repkina

Standard



Photo credit: Anatolii Ivanytskyi

Leo-Pivoniia

2022 AVSA Convention Opening Ceremony New Introduction

Hybridized by: A. Ivanytskyi
Standard



Family Portrait: *Achimenes* 'Petite Marquise'

By Mel Grice

Email: melsgrice@gmail.com

Achimenes 'Petite Marquise' is one of my favorite gesneriads. The dark green foliage is attractive, but when paired with the bold pink face spotted and striped with darker pink rays, the plant makes a strong statement.

Serge Saliba from Romania created this floriferous hybrid. I would call it a miniature since it stays relatively small in size compared to many other *Achimenes* hybrids. I grow it under two or more T8 lightbulbs on my light stands. The stronger light you can give it, the better results you will achieve.

Achimenes have rhizomatous root structures. Rhizomes are one of the three root structures found in gesneriads, the other two being fibrous only and tuberous. Rhizomes are actually modified stems, and they grow perpendicular to the force of gravity. Scaly rhizomes are produced both under the soil and above the soil, where they form leaf axils when conditions are favorable. Scaly rhizomes often resemble pine cones and help the plants remain alive during the dry season in the wild. They perform the same function as a tuber or bulb, so do not discard the pot if the plant looks dead — it is only resting or dormant.

Achimenes are propagated by placing stem cuttings in water or potting mix. Stem cuttings root very quickly, sometimes within days. Rhizomes can be planted whole, in pieces or by removing individual scales and planting them. I begin by placing a wick in the bottom of the pot, since I will eventually wick water the plants once roots are well established. I plant three to four rhizomes in a shallow, 4-inch pan pot, laying them on their sides approximately 1 inch deep in a loose, well-drained medium. Some rhizomes are several inches long, so I break them into about one-half-inch sections.

Once planted, I place the pot under a clear plastic dome on a capillary mat that is wicked to the tray below it.

Some *Achimenes* are shy rhizome producers, so don't assume that a pot will be full of rhizomes for the next growth cycle. Always take some stem cuttings.

This species seems to require warmth to start, so I place the pot on a top shelf of the light stand just two or three inches from a T8 or T5 lightbulb. The pots are gradually lowered away from the lights as the plants grow. Once the plants reach about three inches tall, I pinch like you would an African violet trailer. Leave one or two leaf nodes and pinch out the growing tip to encourage branching. The more branches you have, the more floriferous the plants will be. The tip cuttings that you pinch off may be rooted individually in a plastic cup. If you have numerous cuttings, they may be placed in a larger pot under a dome for a few weeks to root.

All cuttings should eventually produce a scaly rhizome. Before you know it, your rhizomes could

increase exponentially into more rhizomes than you know what to do with. Bear in mind that some *Achimenes* are shy rhizome producers, so don't assume that a pot will be full of rhizomes for the next growth cycle. Always take some stem cuttings for insurance.

A crucial factor in rhizome production is keeping the plants consistently fed and watered. If excess drying occurs too early in the growth cycle, the plants may go dormant prematurely without producing any rhizomes for next year. That is why

I try to have two or more pots of a variety growing so I won't lose it if I occasionally forget to water a tray of plants. I try to place each pot in a different part of my plant room so they are watered on different days.

Many people grow *Achimenes* outside in hanging baskets during the warmer months of the year. My gesneriads stay inside all year long since I don't want to risk bringing unwanted pests to my collection.



Achimenes 'Petite Marquise' exhibited by Brandon Erikson at The Gesneriad Society Flower Show in Omaha, NE.
Photo credit: Mel Grice.

How a PAR Meter Helped Me Save My African Violets

By Roy D. Roberts

Email: roy_roberts@yahoo.com

I purchased several full-spectrum grow lights (80W, 3800 Lumens) from Sunco.com a few months ago. I placed the new lights 15 inches above my plants for a 10-hour duration. Before long, many of my plants had signs of getting way too much light (burn marks on leaves, tight crowns and very short bloom stalks).

So, I started doing research. All the articles from the African Violet Society of America and other online sources gave me typical lux readings, and some even went further to provide Photosynthetic Photon Flux Density (PPFD) and Daily Light Integral (DLI) reading recommendations for African violets. I did not want to purchase a light meter to measure lux, so I located an app for my Android phone that would provide lux, PPFD and DLI readings. The results I observed didn't seem to be too far out of range from the recommendations, so why were my plants "going up in flames"?

Since I had used fluorescent shop lights to grow African violets in the past, I started by using the app to check on those lights. Measurements seemed fine. Then I checked with the app on an LED 5000K white light. Once again, the app seemed to work fine.

So, I dug deeper into the very technical world of light. I learned about how different colors and light spectrums are used by plants for photosynthesis. Then it became clear that people and plants see light differently. Lux is a measurement for the light humans can see. If you only have white lights, using lux to judge the quantity of light your plants receive is OK because most of the light is in the human range. That does not work for full-spectrum LED lights that are typically manufactured to provide the light spectrum that

plants need for optimum growth, especially blue and red. Most lux meters do not measure all the blue and red light because it is out of the human visual range.

Keep in mind that the yellow and green light wavelengths may be used by plants but to a much lesser extent. New LED grow lights tend to focus more on the blue and red wavelengths that have a greater impact on vegetation and bloom production.

I realized it was not the heat from the lights that was impacting the plants; it was the intensity of the light that caused the burns.

So, what did I do? I ended up purchasing a PAR meter (the FH-100 by FUTUREHORTI, which costs approximately \$55). What does a PAR meter do? It measures the quantity of light lux in the 400 to 700 nanometer wavelengths. Don't confuse this lux with the lux for humans. A PAR meter measures a much wider spectrum of light. It may measure all the light spectrums that plants use (except for infrared, UV or far red), but it is better suited for the advanced lights that are available today.

Using the PAR meter, I was able to take measurements as I monitored plant growth and appearance during my setup modifications. What I realized is that it was not the heat from the lights that was impacting the plants. That might have been the case with fluorescent lights, but not the LED lights. They are much “cooler” temperature wise. It was the intensity of the light that caused the burns. My plant stand is now set to a distance of 24 to 26 inches from the lights to the plant tops. I leave the lights on for approximately 10 hours. My plants are doing great at this level and duration of light.

One final note: Keep in mind that Photosynthetically Active Radiation (PAR), which is used to calculate PPFD and eventually DLI, is the best measurement to use for plant growth. In the *African Violet Magazine* article “Full to Complete and the Next Frontier” by Dr. Minh Bui, it is clear that artificial lighting advancements have outpaced our understanding for proper measurement and thus the most effective and efficient use. Future growers and hybridizers may focus their efforts on plants that grow better in specific light conditions (i.e., natural light, artificial light or full spectrum).

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Award-Winning Plants from the 2022 AVSA Convention

By Sophia Bennett and Vickie Crider

Email: editor@avsa.org

Showroom visitors at this year's AVSA Convention had 289 African violets, other gesneriads and designs to admire. The winners were announced at a special awards banquet on Thursday night. We hope you enjoy viewing several of the top plants

from this year's show. Additional pictures will be shared in the next issue of *African Violet Magazine*. A complete list of winners is included on page 38. Photos were supplied by official *AVM* photographer Winston J. Goretsky unless otherwise noted.



Best in Show (Amateur)/Best Standard/Best Vintage Picasso

Hybridized by: M. Tremblay

Grown by: Wayne Geeslin

Large



**2nd Best in Show (Amateur)/
Best Miniature
Little Blue Bandit**

Hybridized by: P. Sorano/
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses
Grown by: Kathy Lahti
Miniature



**3rd Best in Show (Amateur)/
Best Semiminiature
Rob's Fuddy Duddy**

Hybridized by: R. Robinson
Grown by: Linda Sumski
Semiminiature



**Best Trailer
Rob's Willawong**

Hybridized by: R. Robinson
Grown by: Mary Corondan
Semiminiature

Photo credit: Richard Craft



Best Gesneriad
Petrocosmea minor

Grown by: Linda Hall



Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection
Jolly Disco

Hybridized by: H. Pittman

Grown by: Kathy Lahti
 Miniature



Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection
Optimara Little Crystal

Hybridized by: Holtkamp

Grown by: Kathy Lahti

(Also included in this collection:
 Little Blue Bandit; pictured on
 page 35)

Miniature



**2nd Best AVSA Mini/
Semi Collection
Ice Age**

Hybridized by: P. Sorano/
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses
Grown by: Linda Sumski
Semiminiature



**2nd Best AVSA Mini/
Semi Collection
Lollipop Kid**

Hybridized by: P. Sorano
Grown by: Linda Sumski
Semiminiature



**2nd Best AVSA Mini/
Semi Collection
Ness' Crinkle Blue**

Hybridized by: D. Ness
Grown by: Linda Sumski
Semiminiature

Award-Winning Plants from the 2022 AVSA Convention: Complete List

By Vickie Crider

Email: showawards@avsa.org

■ Best African Violet in Show

Picasso
Wayne Geeslin

■ 2nd Best African Violet in Show

Little Blue Bandit
Kathy Lahti

■ 3rd Best African Violet in Show

Rob's Fuddy Duddy
Linda Sumski

■ Best AVSA Standard Collection

Buckeye Nostalgia, Picasso, Cajun's Delicate Touch
Wayne Geeslin

■ 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection

Love Potion, Ma's Soiree, Picasso
Michael Jackson

■ Best AVSA Mini/Semiminiature Collection

Little Blue Bandit, Jolly Disco,
Optimara Little Crystal
Kathy Lahti

■ 2nd Best AVSA Mini/ Semiminiature Collection

Ice Age, Lollipop Kid, Ness' Crinkle Blue
Linda Sumski

■ Best AVSA Species Collection

S. 5h clone *rupicolus* lite, S. 5b clone *grotei* Silvert,
S. 5a clone *grandifolius* No. 237
William Patterson

■ Best Standard

Picasso
Wayne Geeslin

■ Best Semiminiature

Rob's Fuddy Duddy
Linda Sumski

■ Best Miniature

Little Blue Bandit
Kathy Lahti

■ Best Trailer

Rob's Willawong
Mary Corondan

■ Best Species

S. 5b clone *grotei* Silvert
Linda Sumski

■ Best Gesneriad

Petrocosmea minor
Linda Hall

■ Best Design in Show

"Clear Night Sky"
Scott Ammann

■ 2nd Best Design in Show

"Oaklawn"
Glenda Williams

■ 3rd Best Design in Show

"Hot Springs Natural Park"
Diane Buck

■ Best Holtkamp Collection (Amateur)

Optimara Little Crystal, Optimara Little Ruby,
Optimara Little Pearl
Kathy Lahti

■ 2nd Best Holtkamp Collection (Amateur)

Optimara Little Aztec, Optimara Little Chickasaw,
Optimara Little Ottawa
Linda Sumski

■ Best Robinson Collection

Rob's Denim Demon, Rob's Fuddy Duddy,
Rob's Outer Orbit
Linda Sumski

■ Best Buckeye Collection

Buckeye Lazy Daze, Buckeye Country Gal,
Buckeye Let's Roll
Michael Jackson

■ Best Russian/Ukrainian Collection

N-Karmel, N-Snegopad, N-Vera
Linda Sumski

■ **Best Lyndon Lyon Collection**

Lollipop Kid, Lyon's June Bug, Ice Age
Linda Sumski

■ **Best Vintage**

Picasso
Wayne Geeslin

■ **Best Hunter's Kashmir**

Hunter's Kashmir
Karen Buchanan

■ **Best Jersey Snowflakes**

Jersey Snowflakes
Wayne Geeslin

■ **Best Ozark Sinningia**

Ozark Rosy Cheeks
Linda Sumski

■ **Best The Alps**

The Alps
Terri Post

■ **Best Semiminiature Trailer**

Rob's Willawong
Mary Corondan

■ **Best Natural Garden**

"Mountain Biking"
Rebecca McNeel

■ **Best Dish Garden**

"Hot Springs Natural Park"
Diane Buck

■ **Best Terrarium**

"Petit Jean State Park"
Betty Ferguson

■ **Best Underwater Design**

"The Arkansas River"
Fran Russom

■ **Best Interpretive Plant Arrangement**

"The Old Mill"
Scott Ammann

■ **Best Interpretive Flower Arrangement**

"Clear Night Sky"
Scott Ammann

■ **Best Container Garden**

"Hot Springs Natural Park"
Diane Buck

■ **Best in Show (Commercial)**

Rob's Chilly Willy
Ralph Robinson

■ **2nd Best in Show (Commercial)**

S. ionanthus ssp. *ionanthus* v. *ionanthus*
Joanne Schrimsher

■ **3rd Best in Show (Commercial)**

Tiptop
Glenda Williams

■ **Best AVSA Species Collection (Commercial)**

S. 5a clone *grandifolius* No. 237, *S. ionanthus* ssp. *ionanthus* v. *ionanthus*, *S. 5b* clone *grotei* Silvert
Joanne Schrimsher

■ **Best Other Gesneriad (Commercial)**

Episcia 'Silver Skies'
Glenda Williams

■ **Best Horticulture Showcase (Commercial)**

Joanne Schrimsher

■ **Judge's Special Award**

Sinningia 'Tory'
Mary Corondan

■ **Judge's Special Award**

"Pinnacle Mountain State Park"
Linda Hall

■ **Judge's Special Award**

"The Natural State"
Danny Tidwell

■ **Horticulture Sweepstakes (Amateur)**

Linda Sumski

■ **Runner-up Horticulture Sweepstakes**

Mary Corondan

■ **Design Sweepstakes (tie)**

Fran Russom
Betty Ferguson

■ **Commercial Horticulture Sweepstakes**

Glenda Williams

■ **Runner-up Commercial Horticulture Sweepstakes**

Joanne Schrimsher

■ **Bill Foster Memorial Award**

Picasso
Wayne Geeslin

Unusual Vessels for African Violets: Glass Bubbles

By Sophia Bennett

Email: editor@avsa.org

African violets thrive in clay pots, plastic pots, plastic cups acting as pots and self-watering pots. But do they always have to be displayed in pots? This is the first in a series of articles on unusual vessels for African violets.

In the Facebook group African Violet Nerds, Susan Holzwarth Lasley shared photos of African violet leaves placed in the hanging glass containers commonly used for air plants. Lasley found that placing her starts under a dome works best. One day, she decided to try air plant bubbles from a dollar store instead as an experiment.

"They have a small hole that is currently covered with tape," she said in her post. "I remove the tape if too much moisture builds up inside the bubble. My space is very limited; thus, I was in need of an attractive way to start my leaves. (The bubbles are hanging from) a simple shower curtain tension rod with fishing line. The leaves were placed in shot glasses. The stone in the bottom just makes it look pretty. Please wish me luck that the babies will arrive in a few short months."



Lasley later updated her post with the following: "One mistake I made was not using S hooks. These are tied to the rod. It is difficult to remove them. I would recommend using a simple paper clip at the top of the globes to attach them to the fishing line. This way they can be easily removed for maintenance."

"Perfectly Pittman" Video

This video chronicles the multiple hybrids, growing techniques, growing spaces and AVSA involvement of Hortense and Ray Pittman.



Jolly Orchid

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format \$20**

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Annual Convention and Show
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MAY 28 – JUNE 4, 2023**

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Getting to Know Anatolii Ivanytskyi

By Anatolii Ivanytskyi

Editor's note: As part of our ongoing series on African violet and gesneriad hybridizers from Eastern Europe, I asked Anatolii Ivanytskyi of Lviv, Ukraine, creator of the Leo African violet series, to introduce himself and answer a few questions. I hope you enjoy learning more about him.

Greetings, dear colleagues and African violet lovers. I live in Ukraine. My love for plants began at a young age. For many years I grew various plants, first on the windowsill, then in the garden. Then I really liked gladioli. I had about 100 varieties. I think this love for growing flowers and plants was passed on to me from my grandfathers, who cultivated the land.



Anatolii Ivanytskyi

While studying at the Lviv Polytechnic Institute, I read an article in a magazine about African violets by hybridizer Boris Makuni. I was very interested in these plants and this interest remained with me for decades. There were difficulties and failures in the beginning of growing African violets because I didn't know how to take care of them. Here is one example. I received 16 violet leaves and put them

in glasses. They began to wither and gradually died one after another. I thought that violets were not my plant. Later I learned that the leaves in the crystal glasses of water did not develop because the crystal contained lead, which prevents root system development.

In 2001, I saw an ad for African violets on the internet and thought, "Can't I handle violets?" I bought violet leaves again, this time from Lviv hybridizer Gennady Komkov. Some leaves died but most survived and rooted. That's how it all started. Visiting African violet shows in Kyiv, where I received consultations on growing violets, also helped me a lot.

Today, I successfully grow violets and hybridize my favorite plants. The names of my violets begin with the prefix Leo. This is from the word Leopolis, which the city of Lviv was called in ancient times.



Leo-Snizhana

In 2013, myself and several other enthusiasts in Lviv established a club called "Fialka Galichiny" (Violet of Galicia) for lovers of violets and other gesneriad plants. We held shows not only in Lviv,

but also in other cities of the western regions of Ukraine: Rivne, Lutsk, Ivano-Frankivsk, Chernivtsi.

How did you start hybridizing violets?

As usual, a person first learns the basics and then he improves. And so it happened for me. At first, I learned to grow plants, and then I wanted to do hybridizing and cultivation of chimeras. I read literature on hybridizing African violets and tried to pollinate them, and it worked. (I had a little experience from the pollination of gladioli.) I showed my first seedling, Lviv Secession, to our Ukrainian hybridizer, Olena Lebedskaya. She liked it very much, and that encouraged me to keep going.

Are there any violets you like or dislike working with?

At first, I was indifferent to chimeras, but later I became interested in them and was able to obtain, fix and grow chimeras from peduncles. I have gotten a few chimeras, including Leo-Palke Kokhannya, Leo-Halina and Leo-Smile of Makuni.

I really like to grow seedlings, the process of pollination itself and the setting of seedpods. Watching how young plants grow and release flower buds is very fascinating.

What are you working on now?

I wanted to get yellow African violets. I saw yellow flowers on the internet, probably with color correction because over time, I heard nothing more about them. I had success in my first attempt at a series of yellow-flowered African violets. Some of them are tested and have become varieties and some are still being tested. Like all hybridizers and lovers of violets, I want something unusual, beautiful and with different shapes of flowers.

Your experience shows that people should keep trying even if they weren't originally successful at growing or crossing African violets. What advice would you give to other hybridizers, including those who have had some early failures?

I agree with you. You always have to keep working to your goal. I had three attempts to grow African violets. I learned not only how to grow



Leo-Bilotsvit Vesniani



Leo-Zolotaia Osa



Leo-Svit Dalekyrh Zirok

them, but also how to hybridize my own interesting varieties. For other hybridizers and those who have had early failures, do not stop and do not give up. Continue to cross varieties. Write in a book the results of crosses and do an analysis. Choose which plants to pollinate carefully and guess what will happen as a result of your crosses. Use the literature on these issues to inform your choices.

Birthmarking on African Violets

By Dr. Jeff Smith

Email: jsmith4@bsu.edu

An African violet grower describes her plant as having leaves with red patches on the backs of them, which show up as darker patches on the surface of the leaves. Also, the flowers are almost solid purple instead of white with purple markings.

The plants described above suffers from a condition known as birthmarks. The gene for making the red leaf back pigment (an anthocyanin) is randomly turning off and on. When the gene is working, the red pigment is made in the lower epidermal cells of the leaf, giving the whole leaf a darker green appearance. When the gene is not working, the red pigment is not made and the leaf appears a lighter green in coloration. You might think of this as being similar to the spots and dashes in fantasy flowers, but appearing in the leaves. The pattern of red and green is totally unpredictable and can vary considerably from leaf to leaf in the plant. While the plant may look diseased, it is actually very healthy.



Birthmarking shown on the front of African violet leaves.

The condition often persists through leaf cuttings and may or may not be stabilized in the baby plants. If you don't want the condition, I'd suggest taking the leaf that is as solid a green (or red) as possible and putting it down to root. Check the color of the skin on the petiole. If the petiole skin is red/green, then you'll often get babies with the birthmark trait. If the petiole color is solid green or red, hopefully the resulting babies will only show one form of the trait, but they will always be suspect in their genetic stability.



Birthmarking on the back of African violet leaves.

At times, the condition does get expressed in the flowers. In these cases, the amount of pigment will randomly turn off and on, giving the flowers a mottled or almost fantasy appearance. I don't know the cause for the condition. It likely is a random mutation in the stem's apical meristem or growing point that just happens to be more visible to us because of other color changes.

This article originally appeared in the July/August 2002 issue of African Violet Magazine.

African Violet Terms: Growing and Showing

As we get ready for fall shows, it's helpful to know some of the terms used in grooming plants and judging. A good reference is the *AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges*, which contains information on African violet culture as well as the rules and regulations for African violet shows, judges, judging and other valuable information for exhibitors. We've included some key terms from the guide here. Good luck to all exhibitors!

■ Plant Terms

Condition: The cultural appearance of a plant, including an exhibit at the time of judging.

Crown: The head of the plant above the soil line. African violets are described as having single or multiple crowns.

Disbudding: Removal of the flower buds or bud stems to delay blooming for a later time.

Double-potting: The placement of a plant, still in its smaller pot, within a larger pot with the space between the two pots filled with soil mix.

Flared-top pot: A pot designed with an extended lip that serves as an additional support to the foliage.

Floriferousness: The quantity of bloom on a plant.

Neck: A plant that has lost leaves from the lower portion of the plant, exposing the main stalk above the potting mixture.

Plant types: African violet plant types include miniature, semiminature, standard, trailer and large.

Rosette: A cluster of leaves radiating symmetrically from a central stem.

Slip-potting: Placing a plant into a clean pot of the same size to hide any disfigurement or dirt on the pot.

Sport: Plants that have developed new features not seen in the parent plant. This can occur naturally or be chemically induced.

Sucker: The beginning of a new plant that forms near the base of a plant or in the lower axils.

Symmetry: The degree of perfect duplication and overlapping of the foliage evenly spaced around the main stem of the plant. It includes straight petioles with each layer of leaves progressively larger than the preceding layer.

■ Show Terms

AVSA Standard Show: A show sponsored by one or more AVSA Affiliate clubs that conforms to requirements set forth by AVSA for points scales and judging.

Commercial Horticulture Division: Members who sell African violet plants and supplies (when an affiliate show has no commercial division, AVSA Commercial Members can enter any class in the show; they also can enter the Design Division in any show). Commercial Members exhibit specimen plants or display tables and showcases.

Design Division: Exhibits of artistic and creative use of African violet plants and blossoms. Typically includes Interpretive Flower Arrangements, Interpretive Plant Arrangements and Container Gardens.

Horticulture Division: Plant exhibits, including all plant types, species and gesneriads (other than African violets). The division also includes African violet plants in special containers (unusual, decorative or novel).

Schedule: The "law" of the show, or basic requirements, such as required divisions (for national show) of amateur horticulture, design, special exhibits and commercial horticulture. Affiliate shows do not require a commercial horticulture division.

Special Exhibits Division: Exhibits provide information on propagation and culture of African violets, source of help on Affiliate activities, and AVSA. The division is required in national and affiliate shows.

Design Tips from Award Winner Scott Ammann

By Sophia Bennett

Email: editor@avsa.org

Scott Ammann, a member of the Gateway West Gesneriad Society in St. Louis, Missouri, took home two top awards for his designs at this year's AVSA Convention: Best Design and Best Interpretive Flower Arrangement with "Clear Night Sky," and Best Interpretive Plant Arrangement for "The Old Mill." Ammann is relatively new to designing; the convention was only the third time he'd entered a show of any kind. But he was happy to share some top tips for others hoping to put together creative designs — and explain how he came to love African violets and their kin.



Scott Ammann

"It's About Having Beautiful Blooming Plants All the Time"

Ammann developed a deep love of plants while living in Beijing as a student. His apartment had a glassed-in porch that was crying out for house plants. It was a few subway stops from the Beijing Flower Market, so Ammann and one of his housemates spent a lot of time browsing through the orchids and other species offered by the various vendors. They had quite a collection to distribute to friends when they left.

Back to the U.S., Ammann has been steadily building his indoor and outdoor plant collections. (He estimates he has more than 100 roses, as well as hostas, coral bells and numerous other favorites.) He enjoys collecting specimens that are "a little different — so a plant that's variegated that isn't usually, or something where there's pink when you would usually see green," he says.

One day, when Ammann was visiting the Missouri Botanical Garden, he encountered a table staffed by members of the Gateway West Gesneriad Society. "They said, 'Do you want to learn about these house plants that can flower on and off all year?'" he recalls. He immediately sat down and started chatting with them, then started attending sales and meetings. Now, about half of his house plants are African violets and other gesneriads.

As much as he loves his plants, he believes he is a much better designer than grower. "For me, growing African violets is about having beautiful blooming plants inside all the time," he says. "I have patience, but not for sitting down and plucking all the old growth and making sure things get a quarter turn every day." Even if his plants aren't perfectly symmetrical, designing allows him to put their blooms to good use.

Tips for Creating Successful Designs

Ammann credits much of his success with design to members of his club. "We have a pretty good-sized club with some really experienced people in it," he says. "There are several Senior and Master Judges. They're so giving that it was easy for me to start a collection of violets, and we have good programs showing us how to do designs and hybridize and grow." Below, he shares some of the tips he's learned from them as well as ideas gleaned from his own experience.

Study the Show Schedule

The first step in creating a great design is to examine the show schedule. “Read through those descriptions in the different classes and pick out a couple that right away, when you read the description, you think, I know what I want to do with it. I can see the description in my head,” says Ammann.

Make Two Designs

Ammann’s friend Fran Russom encouraged Ammann to enter his first design competition. At her insistence, he ended up doing two. “She told me, if you do one, you’ll fuss too much over it,” he says. Even though it meant scrambling to finish everything on time, splitting his effort meant he wasn’t pouring everything into one project, which removed some pressure.



“The Old Mill”



“Clear Night Sky”

Keep It Simple

“Lots of designs aren’t complicated. They’re super simple, and by keeping things simple, you can make sure that everything looks really clean,” says

Ammann, echoing feedback he’s received from Randy Deutsch and other judges.

The details of a design really matter. For example, Ammann knew he wanted to set “Clear Night Sky” against a solid black background. When he cut into his black posterboard, the exposed edge was white. Rather than leaving it, he used a permanent marker to color the white parts and achieve a solid black piece.

It’s also important to think through the logistics of a design. If an idea sounds really interesting but seems too challenging to execute well, it may not be worth doing. Again, judges pay more attention to clean execution than design complexity.

Make Designs Seamless

Ammann also praises Linda Hall, who is a master of hiding her reservoirs. “I like it when I look at a design and think, how did they get that plant in there, or how did they get that flower in there?” he says. A design will look its best when it’s seamless and cohesive, with things such as structural elements and adhesive completely out of sight.

Don’t Try to Win

Ammann encourages everyone to try designing, but not with the goal of winning awards. “Designing is fun because you’re trying to make something pretty,” he says.

If you do it to win, it will be less fun and you’re more likely to try too hard. “Design to add beauty and to share with people. If you do it for that, you can’t lose. And if you do it enough, you’ll end up getting a ribbon.”

Growing Tip

“Have problems with powdery mildew and don’t want to use a fungicide? Here is a safe and easy spray to use: 1/8 teaspoon flowers of sulfur (sublimed sulfur), 16 ounces of water and two drops of mild dishwashing detergent (like Ivory).

The spray will not harm foliage on most plants, and one application works in most cases, but repeat spray once a week for aggressive cases of mildew.” —Karyn Cichocki



Photo credit: Stephen Covolo

***Streptocarpus* 'Steffano's Brighter Days'**

2022 AVSA Convention Opening Ceremony New Introduction

Hybridized by: S. Covolo



Photo credit: Natalia Skorniakova

RM-Morskoi Tsar'

**2022 AVSA Convention
Opening Ceremony
New Introduction**

Hybridized by: N. Skorniakova
Standard



Photo credit: Galina Lazarenko

LiK- Priksnovenie Dushi

**2022 AVSA Convention
Opening Ceremony
New Introduction**

Hybridized by: G. Lazarenko
Miniature

2023 AVSA Convention: Where It All Began

By Randy G. Deutsch

Email: fundraising@avsa.org

After more than 75 years of traveling all over the United States, the 2023 AVSA Annual Convention will return back to where it all began: the beloved city of Atlanta. Little did those few people who gathered for the very first African violet display realize what they were starting.

The 2023 convention will be a bit different from others because there will not be a local affiliate hosting the show. AVSA will be the host organization for this convention, with chair positions being filled by people from all across the nation.

So, the message we are putting out is that there is a huge need for volunteers to fill the various other chair positions. Please reach out to me or any of AVSA's Officers to learn more about which positions are open. We hope that you will be generous with your time and talents. We want to make the convention one to remember and another rich page in the history book of Atlanta.

We are already working on interesting programs and fun tours and will be announcing those online and in future issues of *African Violet Magazine*.

JOIN US!

2023 AVSA CONVENTION

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2022 AVSA Convention a Reunion and Celebration

By Sophia Bennett

Email: editor@avsa.org

Approximately 190 people gathered to socialize, learn, see show-quality plants and add to their African violet collections at the 2022 AVSA Convention in Little Rock, Arkansas.

After a two-year hiatus, the convention was very much a reunion for AVSA members, many of whom have forged deep friendships through the society. Hugs and exclamations abounded as people reconnected with people they'd only seen on computer screens throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

During Wednesday night's welcome reception, attendees oohed and awed over a slideshow of new African violet introductions. The show opened on Thursday to an enthusiastic crowd. This year's show had 289 exhibits from 46 exhibitors, including 66 interpretive flower arrangements. All award winners were presented with their checks at a banquet later that night.

As usual, there was a long line outside the sales room door on Thursday morning. When it opened, people swarmed in and began snapping up plants from the vendors.

The event wrapped up on Saturday when AVSA installed its new Directors and gave out its Society

Awards during a special banquet. Former President Sue Ramser finally received her past president pin (the Board waited until it could be bestowed on her in person). Immediately afterward, Linda Hall gave a presentation on the Legacy Society, a charitable fund dedicated to the long-term health of AVSA. Her presentation was punctuated by AVSA Secretary (and professional actor) Rich Follett appearing in a Grim Reaper costume to make a further appeal, which drew plenty of laughs from the audience.

The Little Rock Marriott turned out to be an ideal venue for the show. The staff was incredibly polite and helpful, and the views of the river and bridge (which would light up with different colors at night) were stunning. The tours were also well received. Participants were especially enthusiastic about the chance to visit Hot Springs and the Garvan Woodland Gardens, a 210-acre botanical garden.

Forty individuals (more than 20%) of attendees were first-time convention registrants. All were excited to be there and eager to return. Whether it will be your first or 50th time, we hope everybody will attend the 2023 AVSA Convention in Atlanta from May 28 to June 4.



AVSA 1st Vice President Mary Corondan at the podium.
All photos by Richard Craft.



AVSA President Susan Anderson speaks to guests.



Convention Chair Danny Tidwell helps attendees go "Hog Wild" with the University of Arkansas Razorbacks call: "Woo pigs, sooie!"



Rich Follett hams it up.



Hugs from our AVSA office sweethearts: Amy Carruth and Stephanie Travis.



Wayne Geeslin receiving his numerous awards, including Best of Show.



Former AVSA President (and AVM photographer) Winston Goretsky with Laurel Goretsky.



Commercial members Jim and Glenda Williams enjoying the riverfront view.





Attendees enjoyed hors d'oeuvres following the opening night reception on Wednesday.



Some of the nearly 200 attendees at this year's AVSA Convention.



Exhibitors from Bloomlala brought wonderful merchandise for African violet lovers.



Laurel Goretsky displaying merchandise at the Luncheon Auction.

Fund Reports for March/April 2022

By Randy G. Deutsch and Janet Riemer

Email: fundraising@avsa.org

Anne & Frank Tinari Endowment Fund: \$625

The Anne and Frank Tinari Endowment Fund supports the long-term stability of the Society.

■ \$50-\$99

John Novak
Linda Hall

(In memory of Carol Van and Jim Owens)

Wisconsin AV Council

First AVS of Wichita Falls, Texas

(In memory of Virginia Dwyer)

■ \$25-\$49

Oshkosh Violet Society, Wisconsin

■ Under \$25

Joan Wilson

Barbara Burde Endowment Fund: \$185

The Barbara Burde Endowment Fund supports the Society's long-term needs in technology.

■ \$50 to \$99

Lorraine Hilfer, North Royalton, OH
Wisconsin AV Council, Wisconsin

■ \$25 to \$49

Laura Campbell, Camarillo, CA
P. Knight, Gloucester, VA
Oshkosh Violet Society, Wisconsin

■ Under \$25

Joan Wilson, Theresa, WI

Booster Donations: \$2,764

Booster Donations support AVSA's ongoing general expenses.

■ \$1,000 to \$1,099

Robert Bond, Charlottesville, VA
(In Memory of Kathy Bond)

■ \$200 to \$299

Lorraine Hilfer, Royalton, OH
Christina Naumann, Allen, TX

■ \$100 to \$199

Nadeau African Violet Seeds, St. Louis, MO
Sylvia Singh, Tiburon, CA
James Spittel, Aurora, ON, Canada

■ \$50 to \$99

Roger Crickenberger, Clayton, NC
First AVS of Denton, Texas

(In memory of Pat Castiglione)

Garden State AVC, New Jersey
Joyce Groh, Lebanon, PA
Patricia Huffman, Carmichaels, PA
North Star AV Council, Minnesota
Janet Porter, Milwaukie, OR
Carol Semrau, Ramsey, MN
Wisconsin AV Council, Wisconsin

■ \$25 to \$49

Grace Bailey, Virginia Beach, VA
William Hearne, Dublin, CA
Shirley Jones, Piqua, OH
Anita McKee, Williamsville, NY
Janice Murray, New York, NY
Oshkosh Violet Society, Wisconsin
Elizabeth Tan, Skillman, NJ

■ Under \$25

Penny Allen, Port Orchard, WA
Adrienne Clagett, Nashville, TN
Rebecca Destin, Destin, FL
Milly Donahue, Torrance, CA
Shawn Edwards, Las Vegas, NV
Victoria Frey, Howe, OK
Arlene Garvens, Elroy, WI
James Graf, Bloomington, MN
Linda Greiss, Jefferson, GA
Kathleen Gunther, Fairfield, CA
Judy Hanley, Midland, GA
Mary Husk, Austin, TX
Alison Hutchinson, Lancaster, PA
Tanya Iverson, Champlin, MN
Joseph Meyer, Bakersfield, CA

Sharon Suzanne Moran, Falls Church, VA
Claudie Parrish, Fresno, CA
Susan Purcell, Troy, MI
Stan Raugh, Temple, PA
Geneva Stagg, Germantown, TN
Mary Vasconcell, Springfield, IL
Joan Wilson, Theresa, WI

Boyce Edens Research Fund: \$320

The Boyce Edens Research Fund supports research and scholarships.

■ **\$50 to \$99**

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In Memory

Dr. Miriam Logsdon Denham

Dr. Miriam Logsdon Denham passed away on May 13. She was 100. Miriam received her undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Colorado and was an instructor of general biology for non-science majors at the university for many years. She taught many future teachers and worked in Colorado University's continuing education program. She was also active in promoting and educating people on gesneriads. She was a founding member of Gloxinia Gesneriad Growers (3 Gs) in Colorado as well as a member of AVSA. In 2004, Miriam wrote a chapter called "Gesneriaceae (African Violet Family)" in the book "Flowering Plants of the Neotropics." She and her husband Dale did a lot of scientific research and field explorations. They spent time in Central

America, South America and Mexico, where they collected and described a variety of plants. The Miriam Denham Collection at the Colorado State University Herbarium contains approximately 15,000 specimens.

Terry Jordan

Terry was a tremendous supporter of Tampa African Violet Society for many years. She continuously gave of herself in time and gifts to the club. She was well known for her positive outlook and sweet manner. As a grower, she was best known for her Streptocarpus plants, which she exhibited in every show. She gave leaves from these plants and educated the public on how to grow Streptocarpus well. She truly will be missed in all ways.

Does Your Plant Have the Correct Name?

By Mary Thompson

Email: preservingviolets@avsa.org

I'm one of those who finds incorrect or incomplete names on African violets one of my pet peeves, especially on Facebook. I know most violet growers do not have First Class for All and get these leaves and plants from friends, sales and trades. Sometimes they come with misspelled or incomplete names. I was recently involved in an affiliate show and did the entries. I was surprised when a seasoned grower brought several plants that had the wrong name and, in one case, a completely different plant that ended up not matching the description.

One way I research the name of a plant not in First Class for All is to Google it. Most of the time you can identify it by confirming it with a picture. There might be several on Google with a description, which is common among unregistered plants. Descriptions may be conflicting, such as miniatures listed as semiminiatures and vice versa, so be sure to read what is stated and consider the source of the information.

The Russian/Ukrainian violets are another issue. They are usually registered under the Russian

transliterated name, not the English name. However, First Class for All has some listings in which hybridizers have chosen to use English names. For example, LE-Pisanka is cross-referenced in First Class for All as LE-Easter Eggs.

Google may be helpful when you have the English name and you know it is a Russian/Ukrainian plant. Be cautious when using Google, though, as the same plant may be spelled differently in various listings. Their descriptions may also be conflicting. When entering a show, the transliterated Russian/Ukrainian name should be used unless the plant is registered in First Class for All using an English name. For that reason, it is very important to know what the transliterated Russian/Ukrainian name is.

I know I'm probably preaching to the choir, but it's important to have the correct name even if you do not trade, show or sell. If someone only has a couple violets and is in a club, another member will gladly help them out with making sure everything is correct.

Growing Tip

"No matter how tired I am after spending a day potting plants, I make sure my gallon jugs of water with fertilizer are full and I have at least

five wick reservoirs ready for newly potted plants. That way, I can start the next day's potting with energy." —Dale Martens

Member Profile: Frank Tropea

By Sophia Bennett

Email: editor@avsa.org

AVSA and Bay State African Violet Society member Frank Tropea has been a lover of various house plants since he moved out of his parents' home. Though he started with "easy" plants such as pothos and Swedish ivy, one day he brought home two African violets and was hooked. "What really impressed me at the time was that the white-colored African violets blossomed even during a brutal New England winter, which I considered no mean feat," he says.



AVSA member Frank Tropea. All photos by Peg Crawford.

Like many novice growers, he overwatered the plants and both died. His love of African violets has never ceased, though, and he continues to expand his collection. Most of his plants come from Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses, Woodland Blooms or Linda's Secret Garden.

"African violets add both color and beauty to my apartment, and I am quite devoted to my plants,"

he says. "I recommend growing African violets for fascination, joy and true tranquility in an often very ugly and grim world. Such deep beauty can keep one's hopes and spirits up."





AV Creative Corner: DIY African Violet Carrier

By Rich Follett

Email: avcreativecorner@gmail.com

Anyone who has grown African violets for show knows that transporting them safely to the show site is always a hassle. This month's AV Creative Corner features a do-it-yourself African violet carrier made from inexpensive materials. Even a completely inexperienced do-it-yourselfer can complete this project easily in about twenty minutes time, and the carrier can be used over and over for years to come.

Here is what you will need:

- Clean plastic container with a lid (I used a 27-quart Sterilite container)
- Piece of 2-inch-thick upholstery or similar foam large enough to cover the base of the container
- Measuring tape
- Yardstick or straight edge
- Permanent marker
- Box cutter or craft knife



Supplies to make a DIY African violet carrier. All photos by Janet Heishman.

Step One

Measure the inside of the container and cut a piece of the upholstery foam to the correct size to fit snugly inside.

Step Two

Using the permanent marker and straight edge, mark a series of longitudinal lines on the foam, extending to about 1 inch away from the edge. These do not need to be measured; use your eye and space them close together to carry minis and semiminis, farther apart for standards and trailers. I like to grow minis and semiminis, so my lines are fairly close together. My carrier is also very shallow for this same reason. If you like standards and trailers, just use a deeper container.



Draw lines on the foam extending to about 1 inch from the edge.

Step Three

Using the box cutter or craft knife, cut through the foam where you have drawn the lines. It will take two or possibly three passes to cut completely through the foam, which is very dense. Cut on a mat or similar surface to avoid damaging your furniture. Be sure not to cut past

the ends of the lines that you drew. The carrier will only work properly if there is an inch or so of uncut foam at either end.

When you are all done cutting, your piece of foam should look like the image below.



Once the foam is cut, it should look like this.

Step Four

Place the cut foam in the bottom of the container. If you cut it snugly enough, it should not need to be glued in place, but will hold itself in place naturally. Tuck plant pots into the gaps in the foam, making sure they are snug.



Tuck plants in the gaps in the foam to hold them in place for transport.

Step Five

Place the lid on the container to keep your plants safe for travel. Don't ask me how I know (I'll never tell), but this carrier can be turned upside down or kicked across a room without breaking a single leaf on the plants inside. Happy growing!



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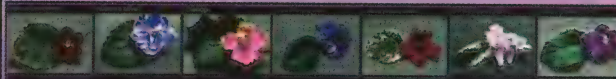
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Volume 75 Number 5

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Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.



President's Message

By Susan Anderson

Email: president@avsa.org

Board members of my local club recently met to discuss our options for programs for the coming year. Surprisingly, we had several pages of ideas and suggestions. I realize that may not seem like much of a problem, but it is still a challenge. We want to bring value to our members and support them in learning how to grow beautiful African violets. Knowing we could not cover everything on the list, the board had the tough job of narrowing the field to those programs that will best meet the needs of our membership. By knowing the skills and abilities of our members, we were able to outline a year's worth of programs that will be educational, enjoyable and hopefully spark further interest in African violets.

AVSA is working on a similar task. There are many, many ideas for things we could do out there, but it takes people, resources and time to complete them all. Results from the recent membership survey will guide us in knowing more about the needs and desires of the members. Please provide suggestions for consideration using the QR code or this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9BHKRG9>. And, if you are inclined to help, please contact the AVSA committee chairs or directors to inquire on how you may be of service. Thank you to our existing volunteers for your service, and keep up the great work.

2022 AVSA Member Survey



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Sharing Knowledge

Has your local club run out of new ideas for programs? Consider reaching out to other affiliates. Many AVSA board members, especially our directors and officers, would gladly assist or conduct a program virtually. Inviting a guest speaker to attend your club meeting virtually can really spice things up.

Because there is interest in sharing program ideas, please gather your program materials and be willing to exchange them with other affiliates. AVSA plans to create an area on the website where clubs can post topics and share program supplies. I hope you and your affiliate will contribute.

Now is when many local clubs hold fall shows or displays. These are terrific opportunities to showcase to the public the numerous hybrids that exist. These events are wonderful educational opportunities and encourage novices to try growing violets. If you need plants for demonstrations, remember that our Commercial Members always have a wonderful supply of new varieties.

Updated Judge's Handbook

Judges: Have you picked up the new *AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges*? It is absolutely gorgeous, with illustrations throughout that capture the beauty of African violets. Thank you to the Shows and Judges Committee for the many hours of reading, writing and proofing that went into updating and revising this latest version of the Handbook. It far exceeded my expectations.

Happy growing, showing and sharing!



Editor's Notes

By Sophia Bennett

Email: editor@avsa.org

It's hard to believe I've been at the helm of *African Violet Magazine* for a full year now. It's been a joyous ride. I've learned so much, both professionally and personally. Thank you for allowing me to continue serving as the editor of this fine publication.

What's been occupying your mind for the last year? Are you working on new hybrids? Trying to coax leaves into producing babies? (Three of mine have finally grown little plantlets — yay!) Getting plants ready to enter in upcoming competitions? If you're also learning new things about growing and showing, please let me know. Our Article Contest runs through the end of the year. Even if you aren't sure about writing a whole article, send me a growing tip. We have one from Paul Kilroy on page 35 that had such great detail it became a standalone piece.

I'm always excited to hear about what clubs are doing to recruit new members or offer new activities for existing ones. Ann Athey with the First African Violet Society of Denton was kind enough to write about her club's Lunch and Learns (page 22), which are providing an additional way for members to socialize and learn. Roy Roberts penned a piece about the African Violet Society of Greater Tulsa's plan to preserve African violet hybrids developed by a well-known former member. Learn more and see how you can help on page 23.

Roy's project overlaps nicely with the work of AVSA's Violet Preservation Committee, which helps people find vintage and wanted violets. Check out their wish list on page 13. I understand there's high demand for the Original 10 (especially Commodore, Mermaid and Viking) right now.

Prepare to see some beautiful pictures in this issue. In addition to more 2022 new introductions, we have additional winners from the 2022 AVSA Annual Convention in Little Rock (page 6) and the top species plant from July's Gesneriad Society Convention (page 42). I'm quite partial to this month's Family Portrait plant, *Nematanthus tessmannii* 'Iporanga' (page 30). I had a blast making this kokedama moss ball, a fascinating way to display African violets and other plants. Learn how to make your own on page 34.



Fall is my favorite time of year. After a few months of hot weather, I'm ready to pull out sweaters and boots, put stews in the slow cooker and spend Sundays watching football. We'll have some extra sports viewing these next few months, as I've started coaching my daughter's elementary school cheerleading team. Whatever keeps you busy these next few months — whether it's time with loved ones or a renewed focus on the home front after a busy summer — I hope it brings you joy and fulfillment, just like our favorite plants.

African Violet Magazine Article Contest

By Sophia Bennett

Email: editor@avsa.org

AVSA and its Publications Committee are re-opening the Article Contest to generate new content for *African Violet Magazine*. The contest will bring interesting new insights and ideas to African violet lovers — and is offering prizes to six lucky winners.

The Article Contest will accept submissions between March 1 and December 31, 2022. Anyone is welcome to send one or more articles relevant to growing, showing or hybridizing African violets. Entries will be accepted in two categories:

- Beginner/intermediate: articles designed to offer more basic tips; and
- Advanced: pieces with a more scientific take on topics.

Articles should be between 500 and 2,000 words. Please include pictures or illustrations if possible. Photos and other artwork must be high resolution (at least 300 dpi).

All submissions will be edited as needed. Edits will be discussed with the writer, and authors will have a chance to review articles before they are published. We strongly encourage even beginning writers or people who don't consider themselves strong writers to submit articles. If you have good information to share, we are happy to help you craft a piece that you are proud of. Articles will be judged on the quality of the finished piece, not the initial submission.

Keep in mind that *AVM* strives to provide African violet enthusiasts with information-rich stories

they can use as they are growing and showing plants and designs. Articles filled with practical advice and tips will fare better in the contest than personal stories about one person's passion or connection to African violets.

Articles started to run in *AVM* beginning with the May/June 2022 issue. While we will endeavor to run all articles in 2022, some may be pushed into early 2023 if there are enough submissions. AVSA reserves the right not to publish any articles it deems unfit for the magazine. Writers must sign a waiver declaring that their work is original. Please cite sources when appropriate.

A panel of five judges will review the articles and pick a first-, second- and third-place winner in each category. Contest winners will be announced at the 2023 AVSA Convention and in the July/August 2023 issue of *AVM*.

Here are this year's prizes:

- First place: Early/first entry into the sales room at convention OR a one-year AVSA membership.
- Second place: A gift certificate to Black Oak Violets.
- Third place: A set of AVSA 2022 Convention wine glasses.

Submissions and questions about the 2022 Article Contest should be emailed to *AVM* Editor Sophia Bennett at editor@avsa.org or mailed to the AVSA office.

Award-Winning Plants from the 2022 AVSA Convention

By Sophia Bennett

Email: editor@avsa.org

The July/August issue of *African Violet Magazine* included photos of some of the top winner's from this year's AVSA Convention in Little Rock. We continue our series here. Look for more winning

plants, plus several outstanding examples of designs, in the November/December magazine. All photos by Winston J. Goretsky.



Best in Show (Commercial) Rob's Chilly Willy

Hybridized by: R. Robinson
Grown by: Ralph Robinson
Miniature



2nd Best in Show (Commercial) *S. ionanthus* ssp. *ionanthus* v. *ionanthus*

Grown by: Joanne Schrimsher



**Best Holtkamp Collection
Optimara Little Crystal**

Hybridized by: Holtkamp
Grown by: Kathy Lahti
Miniature



**Best Holtkamp Collection
Optimara Little Ruby**

Hybridized by: Holtkamp
Grown by: Kathy Lahti
Miniature



**Best Holtkamp Collection
Optimara Little Pearl**

Hybridized by: Holtkamp
Grown by: Kathy Lahti
Miniature



**2nd Best
Holtkamp Collection
Optimara Little Aztec**

Hybridized by: Holtkamp
Grown by: Linda Sumski
Semiminiature



**2nd Best
Holtkamp Collection
Optimara Little Chickasaw**

Hybridized by: Holtkamp
Grown by: Linda Sumski
Semiminiature



**2nd Best
Holtkamp Collection
Optimara Little Ottawa**

Hybridized by: Holtkamp
Grown by: Linda Sumski
Semiminiature



**Best Russian/
Ukrainian Collection
N-Karmel**

Hybridized by: N. Berdnikova
Grown by: Linda Sumski
Semiminiature



**Best Russian/
Ukrainian Collection
N-Snegopad**

Hybridized by: N. Berdnikova
Grown by: Linda Sumski
Semiminiature



**Best Russian/
Ukrainian Collection
N-Vera**

Hybridized by: N. Berdnikova
Grown by: Linda Sumski
Semiminiature



And the Winners Are ...

By Mary Corondan

Email: winners@avsa.org

■ African Violet and Gesneriad Society of Syracuse, NY — Winners:

- Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Denim Demon, Teen Sweetheart, Mac's Misty Meadow; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Denim Demon; Best Trailer: Rob's Galiwinku; Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia* 'Bullata'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Donna Coleman**.
- Best Standard: Optimara Millennia; Best Miniature: Honey Blue Ace, **Lee Hoke**.
- Best Species: S. 5c1 clone Sigi Falls, **Shirley Mills**.
- Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Penny Moore**.

■ Bay State African Violet Society, MA — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: Wild Irish Rose, Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler, Amethyst; Best Trailer: Honeysuckle Rose, **Nancy Manozzi**.
- Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Wild Irish Rose, Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler, Amethyst; Best Miniature: Aca's Pink Pet, **Nancy Ivanov**.
- Best in Show/Best Standard: Jere's Lunar Eclipse; Best Semiminiature: Hunter's Melon Melts; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Holly Walker**.
- Best Species: S. 5i clone *velutinus* lite, **Sharon Rosenzweig**.
- Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* 'Destiny', **Sue Stafford**.
- Best Design, **Dawna DiOrio**.
- Design Sweepstakes, **Carol Hess**.

■ Garden State African Violet Club, NJ — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Too Much, Buckeye Country Gal, Ma's Debutante; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Eternal Orbit, Hunter's Pink Camo, Plumberry Glow; Best in Show/Best Trailer: Jersey Starlight Trail; Best Standard: Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler; Best Semiminiature: Eternal Orbit; Best Miniature: Honey Blue Ace; Best Species: S. 5c1 clone *tongwensis*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Sandy Skalski**.

- Best Species Collection: S. 5i clone *velutinus*, S. 5h clone *rupicolus*, S. 5f clone *orbicularis*, **Auna Fat**.

- Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Batik', **Luanne Arico**.

- Best Design, **Russ Evans**.
- Design Sweepstakes, **Grace Rarich**.

■ Magic Knight African Violet Society, TX — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: LE-Rozhdenie Galactiki, Tequila Rose, Northern Attitude; Best in Show/Best Standard: Crystal Clear Ocean, **Sandy Schultz**.
- Best Semiminiature: Snow Leopard; Best Miniature: Precious Red; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Ken Froboese**.
- Best Trailer: Jersey Rose Trail, **Dawn Wehrheim**.
- Best Gesneriad: *Kohleria* 'Elvira', **Dorcas Brashear**.
- Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Irene Harney**.

■ Moonlight African Violet and Gesneriad Society, TX — Winners:

- Best in Show/Best Miniature: Orchard's Bumble Magnet, **Anne McBurnett**.
- Best Standard: Rhapsodie Ingrid; Best Semiminiature: Jolly Wit's End; Best Trailer: Senk's Snowy Egret; Best Gesneriad: *Episcia* 'Cleopatra'; Horticulture Sweepstakes **Kathy Leach**.
- Best Species: S. 5b clone *confusa* Mather E, **Greta Graham**.
- Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Bonnie Harris**.

■ Oshkosh Violet Society, WI — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rhapsodie Monique II, Rhapsodie Clementine, Carolina Elegant Affair; Best in Show/Best Standard: Carolina Elegant Affair; Best Semiminiature: Cajun's Lil Sprinkles; Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* 'Patina', **Jerry VandeBerg**.

- 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Ma's Hickie, Hunter's Exit Wound, Red Mount Fuji; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Little Bountiful, Shirl's Cranberry Smoothie, Jolly Devil; Best Miniature: Mac's Coral Carillon; Best Species: *S. ionanthus* ssp. *ionanthus* v. *ionanthus*; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Kevin Degner**.

- Best AVSA Species Collection: *S. 5b* clone *confusa* Mather E, *S. 5i* clone *velutinus*, *S. 5f* clone *orbicularis* var. *purpurea*, **Marty Anderson**.

- Best Trailer: Rob's Boolaroo, **Margaret Sanicola**.

■ Saintpaulia Society of Long Island, NY — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: Harbor Blue, Tiger, Apache Gem; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Boo Man, Rob's Fuddy Duddy, Irish Angel; Best AVSA Species Collection: *S. 5c1* clone *tongwensis* Uppsala 3397, *S. 5b* clone *confusa* Mather E, *S. 5c1* clone House of Amani; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Boo Man; Best Miniature: Blue Scoundrel; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Web of Intrigue'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Joseph Palagonia**.

- Best Standard: Neptune; Best Species: *S. 5c1* clone Pangani Falls, **Levente Hadju**.

- Best Trailer: Carolina Jubilation; Best Design, **Carolyn Klein**.

- Design Sweepstakes, **Claire Schirtzer**.

■ Sho-Me African Violet Club, MO — Winners:

- Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Moonbeam, Rob's Squeeze Toy, Sister Sylvia; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Rob's Fuddy Duddy, **Lynn Canning**.

- 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Hunter's Whitetail Fawn, Mac's Black Jack, Mac's Just Jeff; Best Miniature: Hunter's Whitetail Fawn; Best Trailer: Rob's Jindalee; Best Gesneriad: *Petrocosmea minor*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Linda Hall**.

- Best AVSA Species Collection: *S. 5c1* clone *ionanthus*, *S. 5a* clone *grandifolius* #299, *S. 5h* clone Kacharoroni; Best Standard: Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler, **Jay Vantuyl**.

- Best Species: *S. 5i* clone *velutinus*, **Helen Gieselman**.

- Best Design, **Dale Cox**.

- Design Sweepstakes, **Marian Schaaf**.

■ Tampa Bay African Violet Society, FL — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: Tiger, Buckeye Exotic Dancer, Frozen in Time; Best Standard: Buckeye Exotic Dancer; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Mary Lou Harden**.

- 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: LiK-Tanets Flamingo, Ma's Arctic Sky, Rebel's Splatter Kake, **Sandi Soto**.

- Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Dear, Rob's Antique Rose, Rob's Boogie Woogie; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Jolly Dear, **Glenn Shelton**.

- Best Miniature: Imp's Blue Arsenio, **Jim Boyer**.

- Best Gesneriad: *Aeschynanthus humilis*, **Nancy Kast**.

- Best Design, **Pat Rutzke**.

■ Wisconsin Council of African Violet Clubs, WI — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: The Alps, Rhapsodie Cora, Rebel's Restless Heart; Best Standard: Rebel's Restless Heart, **Arlene Garvens**.

- 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Ma's Mardi Gras, Cajun's Fair Maiden, Ma's Wicked Witch; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Wow, Jolly Dear, Cajun's Lil Sprinkles; Best AVSA Species Collection: *S. 5b* clone *confusa* Mather E, *S. 5c1* clone *ionanthus*, *S. 5c1* clone *tongwensis*; Best in Show/Best Miniature: Dolores' Royal Prince; Best Trailer: Deer Trail; Best Gesneriad: *Primulina dryas* 'Hisako'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Kevin Degner**.

- 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Blue Clouds, Jolly Orchid, Jolly Sailor; Best Semiminiature: Jolly Star; Best Design, **Ruth Mengsol**.

- 2nd Best AVSA Species Collection: *S. 8* clone *rupicolus*, *S. 5b* clone *grotei* Silvert, *S. 5b* clone *confusa* Mather E, **Marty Anderson**.

- Best Species: *S. 5b* clone *grotei* Silvert, **Bonnie Henell**.

- Design Sweepstakes, **Doug Kindschuh**.



AVSA Affiliate Update

By Jeri Anderson

Email: affiliate@avsa.org

Fall is a busy time for African violet clubs as members return from vacation. Many clubs are updating their club information, which is wonderful. We really need updated information on our AVSA website. If you know of a club that has disbanded, please let Amy Carruth and me know. We will verify before removing that club from our website.

To update your club information, from the Home page, place your cursor on the Participate button. Select Find an Affiliate Club from the drop-down menu. Now, on the top portion of the Affiliate page, click on the Update Affiliate Club Information button. The Affiliate Update form will open for you to input your club's information.

Have you taken inventory of your African violet collection? Do you have too many duplicates? Are you using shelf space for a violet you are trying to save? Perhaps it is time to really decide which violets are worth your time and effort. Discard or donate those extra violets. Try to keep your collection at a manageable size. You don't want to have your hobby become a burden instead of a pleasure. I think keeping your collection at a manageable size is one of the hardest things to do.

At your club show and sale, I'd like to suggest that you have an education table where the public can bring their struggling plants from home. Some African violets just need repotting and some grooming, but others really need major surgery. People are so thankful to get their violet back into a healthier state.

At your club show and sale, I'd like to suggest that you have an education table where the public can bring their struggling plants from home.

We have a member working to start a club:

•Jennie Lawrence: Laramie, WY; Email: missjennae@yahoo.com (Jennie also has a Facebook Group called African Violets in the Wyoming Area)

Hopefully, someone will be interested in joining this club in Wyoming.

There are several states that do not have even one African violet club. If you live in one of these states, please consider starting a local club. The AVSA website now has all the information you need to start a new club. From the Home page, click on the Participate button. Select the Find an Affiliate Club option. You will now see the Guide to Start a Club box at the top of the screen. Everything you need to do when forming a club is explained there.



Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

Email: registration@avsa.org

■ Stanley Ko — Shatin, NT, Hong Kong

Ko's Chimera Dreams

- (11359) 05/22/2022 •(S. Ko)
- Single-semidouble pink two-tone pansy.
- Chimera variegated dark green, pink and cream, serrated, pointed/red back. •Semiminiature

■ Sam Cunningham — Houston, TX

Sam's Puerto Vallarta Blues

- (11360) 05/23/2022 •(S. Cunningham)
- Single blue sticktite pansy/darker eye.
- Medium-dark green, plain, longifolia/red back.
- Semiminiature trailer

■ Jared Manning — Louisville, TN

Event Horizon

- (11361) 05/31/2022 •(J. Manning)
- Single pink ruffled bell/variable coral-yellow eye.
- Medium-dark green, ovate, glossy, serrated.
- Miniature

Excitable Boy

- (11362) 05/31/2022 •(J. Manning)
- Semidouble-double pink ruffled pansy/variable yellow streaks, purple fantasy, variable white edge.
- Dark green, wavy, glossy/red back.
- Semiminiature

Gersemi

- (11363) 05/31/2022 •(J. Manning)
- Single pink fluted frilled star/variable purple fantasy.
- Medium-dark green, quilted, serrated. •Standard

Violets Most Wanted List

By Mary Thompson

Email: preservingviolets@avsa.org

The Violet Preservation Committee has been able to make several matches in the past year, and it would be great to make more. If you have

submitted a request, there is no need to request again. Once a match is discovered, you and the person sharing will be notified.

Blue Heron
Dallas Cowboys
Fisher's Leone
Georgia Lover

Marshlands
Moonlight Mural
Rob's Fuddy Duddy

Shan
Something Special
The Alps

The King
White Madonna (Eyerdom)
Young Man's Fancy



Shows and Judges

By Mary Corondan

Email: judges@avsa.org

During a Shows and Judges Committee meeting at the AVSA Judges' Breakfast in Little Rock, members reported that only one judging school was held during 2021. There are currently 289 total judges. A total of 18 Senior Judges tests were administered in 2021.

The AVSA Executive Committee approved shortening the time as a Senior Judge to become a Master Judge. Only 12 years as a Senior Judge will be required rather than 15 years. In 2022, there are 20 Senior Judges who have become Master Judges. They are Kenneth Barbi (Maryland), Susan Barbi (Maryland), Brenda Brasfield (Mississippi), Anne Brown (Nova Scotia), Marjorie Bullard (Texas), Vicki Carr (Virginia), Janet Castiglione (Texas), LuAnn Christenson (Iowa), Vickie Crider (Texas), Marie Gagnon (Quebec), Susan Gimblet (Massachusetts), Irene Harney (Texas), Catherine Heider (Wisconsin), Patricia Knight (Virginia), Sylvia Leeds (Texas), Diane Miller (California), Allene Peek (Texas), Lorna Russell (Ontario), Annie Simard (Quebec) and Carol Semrau (Minnesota).

Judging schools may use either the 2016 version or 2022 version of the *African Violet Society of America Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges* through December 31, 2022. Beginning January 1, 2023, the new, revised edition of the Handbook must be used in all judging schools. You may purchase a PDF or black and white printed copy of the new Handbook on the AVSA Store at www.africanvioletsofamerica.org.

Questions continue to arise regarding the use of dead plant material, such as a branch or twig, in container gardens. Branches or twigs should not be used to achieve height. In addition, they should not have the appearance of being planted. A twig

or branch may be used in container gardens as an accessory, such as to represent a dead tree lying on the ground.

In container gardens,
branches or twigs
should not be used
to achieve height.
In addition, they
should not have
the appearance of
being planted.

The photos on the facing page show the same dish garden with one distinct difference. One has appropriately used the branch as an accessory since it is lying on the ground and represents a dead tree that has fallen. In the other photo, the dish garden would be eliminated from consideration since the same branch has the appearance of being planted.

Remember to update your AVSA Show Entries Program as soon as possible so it will be free of charge. To get your free update, contact the AVSA Office and have your version number readily available.

Most clubs that have fall shows will be holding them again this fall. It is refreshing to be returning to normal in the African violet world.



This example illustrates how dead plant material can be used appropriately as an accessory in a container garden. Photos by Richard Craft.



To avoid elimination from consideration, dead plant material cannot have the appearance of being planted in container gardens as is depicted in the photo.

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the African Violet Society of America, Inc.

By Rich Follett

Email: secretary@avsa.org

The annual membership meeting of the African Violet Society of America, Inc. took place at the AVSA National Convention, "Violets Go Hog Wild in Arkansas," in Little Rock, Arkansas on June 4, 2022.

The annual membership meeting was called to order by Third Vice President Sharon Shannon at 3:16 PM CT. The invocation was given by Dr. Charles Ramser, and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Third Vice President Sharon Shannon. Third Vice President Shannon introduced herself, followed by the officers on the dais, and then presented the AVSA President, Susan Anderson.

Rich Follett, Acting Secretary, reported that a quorum of 50 members was present. Follett read the Standing Rules for the Annual Meeting and moved for their adoption. The motion was seconded by First Vice President Glenda Williams. President Anderson called for a show of hands in the affirmative, and then in the negative. A two-thirds majority having been established, the standing Rules were adopted. A copy of the Standing Rules is attached to these minutes.

President Anderson appointed Mary Thompson, Chair, Scott Ammann, and Douglas Allen to approve the 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes. Leonard Re was appointed Timekeeper. President Anderson appointed Jill Jensen, Chair, Winston Goretsky, and Candace Baldwin to be the Tellers. Randy Deutsch reported that the minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting were approved.

Jill Jensen, Resolutions Chair, presented the Courtesy Resolution which is attached and was published on the AVSA website under the Arkansas convention. Jensen made a motion for the courtesy Resolution to be adopted, followed by a

voice vote, called for by President Anderson. The Resolution was adopted.

President Anderson called for Joyce Stork of the Bylaws Committee to present proposed Bylaws Amendments previously approved by the Board of Directors. Stork presented a proposed amendment, by addition and renumbering, to Article VI, Meetings and Communications, section 1, along with a corresponding rationale. President Anderson called for debate; hearing none, a voice vote was taken, and the amendment was adopted.

Stork next presented an amendment, by addition, to Article VI, Meetings and Communications, Section 2, along with a corresponding rationale. President Anderson called for debate; hearing none, a voice vote was taken, and the amendment was adopted.

Stork next presented an amendment, by deletion and subsequent addition, to Article VI, Meetings and Communications, Section 4, along with a corresponding rationale. President Anderson called for debate; hearing none, a voice vote was taken, and the amendment was adopted.

Stork next presented an amendment, by addition, to Article VII, Board of Directors, Section 3 - Votes, along with a corresponding rationale. President Anderson called for debate; hearing none, the amendment was adopted.

Stork next presented an amendment, by addition, to Article X, Committees, paragraph 17, Standing Committees, along with a corresponding rationale. Before Stork's motion was voted upon, Candace Baldwin made a motion from the floor, along with a corresponding rationale, on behalf of the Website (Special) Committee and the Technology

(Standing) Committee to strike the existing proposed language in Stork's motion and replace it with language which more clearly defined the committees' roles. That language is as follows: 17. TechWeb: shall be responsible for recommending, coordinating, implementing and maintaining all hardware, software, suppliers and support functions in support of AVSA's technology and websites as needed to run the Society. President Anderson called for debate; hearing none, a voice vote was taken, and the proposed language was adopted to amend Stork's previous motion. President Anderson called for debate on Stork's amended motion; hearing none, a voice vote was taken, and the amendment was adopted with Baldwin's language in place.

Stork next presented an amendment, by addition, to Article XII, Amendments to the Bylaws, along with a corresponding rationale. President Anderson called for debate; hearing none, the amendment was adopted.

President Anderson called for further proposed amendments to the bylaws to be presented. There were no further proposed amendments. A copy of the adopted amendments is attached to this report.

President Anderson next called for a report from Nominating Committee chair Kathy Lahti, who submitted the nomination of Rich Follett of Virginia to the post of AVSA Secretary. President Anderson asked for additional nominations from the floor and, hearing none, closed the nominations and called for a voice vote. Rich Follett was elected to the post of AVSA Secretary, to serve until the close of the 2023 annual meeting and congratulations were extended.

Lahti next reported, on behalf of the Nominating Committee, the slate of proposed directors to serve until the close of the 2025 annual meeting: Sam Cunningham, Texas; Marge Farrand, Michigan; Jackie Leitzel, Pennsylvania; William Patterson, Arizona; and April Van Ness, New Jersey. President Anderson opened the floor for additional nominations and, hearing none, closed the nominations and asked for debate. Hearing none,

President Anderson called for a voice vote. The proposed slate of Directors was duly elected and congratulations were extended.

President Anderson recognized the following retiring Directors and requested them to stand as their names were called: Stephen Covolo-Hudson, California; Richard Craft, Nevada; Jill Jensen, Nebraska; Linda Price, Florida, excused; and Mary Thompson, California. Members applauded after all names had been called.

President Anderson recognized Kathy Lahti as the retiring Director of the Nominating Committee, asking her to stand when her name was called. Members applauded.

President Anderson next recognized Randy Deutsch as the 2023 Atlanta Convention Chair and Candace Baldwin as the 2023 Convention Co-Chair and called for Randy to report. Randy offered an official welcome to the 2023 Atlanta convention.

President Anderson called for New Business. None was presented.

President Anderson called for Resolutions Chair Jill Jensen to present "Lest We Forget" - the list of those AVSA members known to have passed away since the last Annual Membership Meeting. Jensen presented the list, as follows: Al Armstrong, LA; Lucille Chester, FL; Peggy Fergon, TX; Bob Green, FL; Marcia Jacobs, MO; Dalice Johnson, SD; Terry Jordan, VA; Marie Montague, MA; Janice O'Neill, MN; Jim Owens, OH; Mary Ann Ryan, NY; Shirley Streit, WI; Carol Van, VA; Fay Wagman, NY; Nancy Weller, VA; and Roger Wheeler, CT.

President Anderson called for any additional names to be added to the list (the list above includes names that were added at that time).

President Anderson announced a Special Called Board Meeting to be held directly after the Open Forum.

President Anderson called for any further business. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:02 PM CT.

2022 AVSA Scholarship Winner has a Passion for Teaching

By Dr. Charles Ramser

Email: scholarship@avsa.org

The recipient of this year's AVSA Boyce Edens Research Fund college scholarship is Mary Ellen Philpott of Virginia. Philpott received her undergraduate degree from Sweet Briar College in 1990 and spent six years as a high school science and math teacher. After taking a break to raise three daughters, she is currently taking courses at Reynolds Community College and Virginia Western Community College with the goal of earning an Associate degree in applied science with an emphasis in horticulture. She would like to teach horticulture to middle or high school students and has a lot of plans for using gardening to spread knowledge and joy to young people.

Philpott's degree also includes a floral design certificate. "I am working to expand my cut flower gardens with hopes of building a business for locally grown flowers and designs," she says. "I have offered classes through our local Parks and Recreation program and offer bouquets at a local market." She gardens using principles of regenerative agriculture in an effort to protect

the health of her soil, something she learned about through the sustainable farming aspect of Reynolds's curriculum.



Philpott will graduate in late 2022 or early 2023. We wish her the best as she takes her knowledge and enthusiasm to her students and community.

Support AVSA when you shop!



Did you know that Amazon has a program for shoppers to designate a charity of their choice, and Amazon will contribute a portion of every dollar you spend? Here's an easy way to support the African Violet Society of America at NO EXTRA COST TO YOU!

Just go to smile.amazon.com and follow the directions.

Select African Violet Society of America as your organization to support.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Use Qualified Charitable Distributions to Support AVSA

By Terri Post

Email: treasurer@avsa.org

Generally, a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) is an otherwise taxable distribution from an IRA (other than an ongoing SEP or SIMPLE IRA) owned by an individual who is age 70 1/2 or over that is paid directly from the IRA to a qualified charity (or combination of qualified charities). AVSA is a qualified charity. So, if you are age 70 1/2 or over and are required to receive an RMD from a retirement plan or IRA (your tax preparer or investment manager should be able to answer this), you may be able to avoid paying tax on the RMD.

What is an RMD? This is a required minimum distribution. The IRS doesn't want you to hold funds in your retirement accounts forever. So, the IRS requires a taxpayer to start to draw funds out when a taxpayer reaches a certain age, using a

complicated calculation, which may end up making the total RMD federally taxable.

Check with your tax preparer or financial manager to see if it would be wise for you to direct your RMD either to AVSA or to split the RMD into a combination of AVSA and other qualified charities. Everyone's individual tax situation is different, so I stress making sure this will work for you first. By doing so, AVSA will receive a donation and you may avoid having to pay tax on the RMD. Win-win!

Again, I would like to stress that AVSA cannot provide tax assistance to its members on any personal tax situation. However, the QCD question has been brought up to me and to the AVSA office as to whether AVSA is a qualified charity for this type of transaction. My response to this is yes.

Design Tips

"When constructing/planting your container gardens, be certain to use plants with small leaves. Size and proportion are extremely important when dealing with miniature landscapes. Be sure to select a very small violet to use as well. Do not use a miniature or semiminature violet that overwhelms the planting. Remember that it is possible to use very small violets that are not in bloom to

fill in your plantings, so long as there is at least one violet in bloom planted."

"When choosing a container to use in interpretive arrangements, remember that white adds ten pounds. It always makes whatever container you use look larger than it really is, perhaps distorting the dominance factor." —Paul Kroll

Coming Events

Check the AVSA Events page (www.africanviolet.societyofamerica.org/events), search the local club on Facebook or contact the organizers listed below for the latest information on these events.

■ September 10-11 — Wisconsin

Wisconsin Council of African Violet Clubs
Show and Sale

St. Jude the Apostle Church Hall
531 Knapp St.

Oshkosh, WI

Saturday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Sunday: 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

Kevin Degner: kevindegner7@yahoo.com

■ September 16-17 — Ohio

Ohio State African Violet Society

Show and Sale

Kingwood Center Gardens

50 N. Trimble Road

Mansfield, OH

Friday and Saturday: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Mel Grice: melsgrice@gmail.com

www.osavs.org

■ September 17 — California

Delta Gesneriad and African Violet Club

Plant Sale and Display

Shepard Garden and Arts Center

3330 McKinley Blvd.

Sacramento, CA

Saturday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Kathy Gunther: kathleenmgunther@gmail.com

Bev Moon: bev@mclure.org

■ September 23-24 — Arkansas

Central Arkansas African Violet Society

Fall Show and Sale

Patrick Henry Hays Senior Center

401 W. Pershing Blvd.

North Little Rock, AR

Friday: noon-5 p.m.

Saturday: 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Alice Brown: Jerrynalice@att.net

■ September 24 — Colorado

Rocky Mountain African Violet Council
Fall Sale

Tagawa Gardens

7711 S. Parker Road

Centennial, CO

Saturday: 9 a.m.-noon

Trudy Brekel: violetlady7@msn.com

■ September 24 — Texas

NASA Area African Violet Society

Fall Plant Sale

Bay Harbour United Methodist Church

3459 FM 518 E

League City, TX

Saturday: 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Dianne Duggan: ddgcampbell@earthlink.net

■ October 1-2 — Minnesota

North Star African Violet Council

Show and Sale

Bachman's Floral, Gift and Garden

6010 Lyndale Ave. S.

Minneapolis, MN

Saturday: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Sunday: 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

Mary Kealy-Falk: mkealyfalk@aol.com

■ October 8 — Michigan

Michigan State African Violet Society

Display and Sale

Matthaei Botanical Gardens

1800 N. Dixboro Road

Ann Arbor, MI

Saturday: 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Lynn Allen: LynnAllen0413@comcast.net

■ October 15 — Nevada

Glitter Gulch African Violet Growers

Education Day: All About African Violets

West Charleston Library, Gallery and Lecture Hall

6301 W. Charleston Blvd.

Las Vegas, NV

Saturday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Mark Romansky: ggavg@gmail.com

■ **October 22 — Nevada**

Glitter Gulch African Violet Growers
African Violet Judging School
Nevada Garden Club Center
800 Twin Lakes Drive
Las Vegas, NV
Saturday: 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m.
Fee: \$20 for students taking the exam;
\$10 for students auditing school only
Shawn Edwards: sde798@gmail.com

■ **November 3-5 — Texas**

Lone Star African Violet Council
Annual Convention: Violets Cruise Texas Rivers
Hosted by Spring Branch African Violet Club and
NASA Area African Violet Society
Doubletree by Hilton Hotel
Houston Intercontinental Airport
15747 John F. Kennedy Blvd.
Houston, TX
Thursday: noon-5 p.m.
Friday: 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Saturday: 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
Teresa Kaminski: tckaminski@sbcglobal.net
Dianne Duggan: ddgcampbell@earthlink.net
www.lsavc.org

■ **November 5 — Missouri**

African Violet Club of Greater Kansas City
70th AVSA Judged Show and Sale
Jacob L. Loose Park Garden Center
5200 Wornall Road
Kansas City, MO
Saturday: 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Vickie Avery: vavery852@gmail.com

■ **November 11-12 — Maryland**

Mid-Atlantic African Violet Society
30th Anniversary Celebration: Violets with Us
Throughout the Years
Convention, Show, Sale
Delta Hotel by Marriott
245 Shawan Rd.
Hunt Valley, MD
Friday: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Saturday: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
www.maavs.org



Join

JOIN TODAY!

Learn more at
africanvioletsofamerica.org
(409) 839-4725
P.O. Box 22417
Beaumont, TX 77720

AVSA is a non-profit, educational organization dedicated to helping African violet enthusiasts enjoy these beautiful plants.

Club Idea: Lunch and Learns

By Ann Athey

Email: aathey0070@aol.com

Does your local group run out of time at your meetings for members to chat about African violets? Our club, the First African Violet Society of Denton, has been holding monthly “Lunch and Learns” since early 2022, where we discuss all things African violets!

At each Lunch and Learn meeting, we review articles from the *African Violet Magazine* or other sources. The articles we select are varied, covering topics including diseases, propagation and watering. We highlight information the author shared and expand it to include our members’ experiences. It is a relaxed time for us to discuss our happy growing experiences or the frustrating challenges we face in our collections.

The format seems to be working with our group, which is made up of both experienced and new growers. The sharing of information provides a rich experience where new growers learn and veteran growers feel appreciated.

We learned of our members’ interest in this type of gathering through a survey, which also informed us of the best dates and times to hold the Lunch and Learns. The meetings have a volunteer host, a position that rotates between members. Each participant brings their own lunch and beverage, and the host serves dessert.

One benefit of the hosting rotation is that it allows us to observe other members’ growing spaces. We get to enjoy unique collections large and small, those belonging to eBay sellers, growers that specialize in standards or minis, or people who

use natural or artificial light. What a nice way for visual learners to get new and improved ideas to incorporate in their own collections. Teacups to display your violets: why not?

The process of setting up the Lunch and Learns gets started three weeks prior to each meeting, when an email is sent with the meeting time, date and the request for a host. The email also asks which articles or topics members would like to cover. We ask for volunteers to facilitate the article discussion. Our group is very creative; one member made a fun game out of the article she selected.

Prior to each Lunch and Learn, members are asked to analytically read each article. During the gathering, people offer opinions about whether we would change our current growing practices based on the article and the reasons why or why not — a great learning experience!

Participation has been very good, averaging seven members for a Lunch and Learn. We don’t hold lunches during the months that we are hosting a show or have other events. I highly recommend this activity for other African violet groups; it helps blend everyone’s growing skills, whether they are new growers, intermediate or highly experienced. Want more information? Please contact me.

It does a mind good to entertain a new way of doing things. We are fortunate the *African Violet Magazine* reaches growers worldwide. This is another way the magazine connects us. There is a sweet kinship among African violet growers that is worth nourishing.

The Perfect Club Project

By Roy Roberts

Email: roy_roberts@yahoo.com

Prior to 2019, the African Violet Society of Greater Tulsa, an affiliate club of the Missouri Valley African Violet Council (MVAVC), was a thriving club with a large number of members. Then the pandemic happened. Membership declined due to the lack of meetings, sales and shows. Since resuming our monthly meetings in late 2021, the process of rebuilding our club has been difficult. Our last plant sale was well attended and all plants were sold in less than three hours. But membership has not increased. So, how do we and potentially other clubs get people interested in growing African violets and becoming active club members again?

To date, our only method of advertising events is the club's Facebook page, which has almost 1,000 followers. Gladly, some of the followers share our sales and other activities with their friends. Also, our meeting host, the Tulsa Garden Center, has been a wonderful resource. They post our meetings and events on their calendar and share our events on their various social media accounts, which substantially expands our public exposure. We are just starting to partner with other AVSA clubs in surrounding states to support and advertise activities. We hope it will result in some additional local or regional interest.

In addition, we recently came up with what we are calling "the perfect club project." We are fortunate to have Dave and Connie (nee Swift) Cornell, the owners of Swift Moist-Rite Planter, as members. The legacy of Connie's parents, June and Jack Swift, is far reaching in AVSA's history. In addition to Jack's invention of the Swift Moist-Rite Planter, June was responsible for hybridizing more than 550 varieties.



A blossom from Stormy Weather, a popular June Swift variety. Photo by Roy Roberts.

While discussing June Swift's contributions at a recent gathering, we came up with an idea that we hope will not only encourage existing members and other people to grow African violets, but will provide a service to the general African violet community by preserving vintage African violet varieties. Our club has decided to find and grow as many of the June Swift varieties as possible. In addition, we hope to sponsor a prize for one of the June Swift varieties at a future convention.

We need African violet groups to help locate these plants. If you have a starter plant(s) or leaves to donate, please contact me to arrange shipping. If the plant(s) or leaves are for sale, please send a note with prices and shipping details. You can locate all the June Swift varieties by using the search function in First Class and entering J. Swift as the hybridizer.



In Search of New Violets

By Dr. Jeff Smith

Email: jsmith4@bsu.edu

When growing out the seedlings from a cross, how do you decide which seedlings to pot up? The question is often a serious concern since the number of seedlings from a cross can number over 100 plants and most growers have limited space. If variegated foliage was a goal of the cross, it might be possible to select seedlings for variegated foliage, as this trait often shows up very early, even in the cotyledon stage. For other traits, it is often impossible to predetermine which seedlings have met the goals of the cross.

There may be a biased focus on potting up the largest seedlings, as they look healthy and are growing well. However, be alert to the possibility that the plants that meet the goal of the cross may be among the smallest of the seedlings. Several questions in this column point out a few of the dangers of skipping over the smaller seedlings from a cross.

Q: I like leaves that are nearly round, such as those seen in some of the species plants. Can the round shape be combined with the clackamas vein pattern?

A: I recently saw a posting on a Facebook group of a cross of this type. The species plant was subspecies *occidentalis* cl. *magungensis* var. *occidentalis*. Only a few seedlings were produced from the cross. One promising seedling with variegated foliage had the broad, round-shaped leaves of the species, but it didn't inherit the clackamas or watermelon veins. The combination of round leaves with clackamas veins should be possible but wasn't seen in this small number of F1 offspring. Clackamas veins are a genetic dominant trait, but most plants probably only carry one copy of the trait (heterozygous). The chance of inheriting this vein pattern in the F1 offspring would be approximately 50%.

Keep in mind that clackamas veins also reduce the size of the plant. When selecting seedlings from a cross with a clackamas parent, it might be a good idea to select smaller seedlings or pot up a variety of different-sized seedlings. Some of the smaller plants might be the ones carrying the clackamas vein trait and could be missed if only large seedlings were kept.

Be aware that fantasy patterns sometimes don't always follow the rules, so a smaller percentage than expected might show the fantasy trait.

Q: What would you suggest for parents to produce wasp-shaped flowers with the reverse fantasy pattern?

A: Wasp-shaped flowers can be treated as a genetic dominant trait. According to breeding records I've seen from Jimmy Dates, one of the early hybridizers of this flower shape, wasp-shaped flowers always had one parent with the trait. This pattern is consistent with a dominant inheritance pattern passing directly from one generation to the next.

The reverse fantasy flower pattern (blue background with white or pink spots/streaks) is likely another dominant trait. This means a cross of a

wasp-flowered parent with a plant with reverse fantasy flowers should produce some offspring with a combination of both dominant traits together. However, be aware that fantasy patterns sometimes don't always follow the rules, so a smaller percentage than expected might show the fantasy trait. Wasp-flowered plants are often smaller than other plants, so be sure to pot up those smaller seedlings. Otherwise, you might miss the combination of traits you are after.

Q: Is there more than one type of girl foliage? If so, do they all inherit the same?

A: Yes, the girl foliage mutation has occurred at least three to four times. There are subtle differences between the mutations, but generally they are similar in appearance. According to the limited amount of data I've seen, all inherit the same way: as a genetic dominant trait. As long as one parent has girl foliage, about half of the F1 offspring will show the trait.

Girl foliage is another example of a trait that tends to reduce the size of the plants. One dose (heterozygous) will decrease the plant size, but a double dose (homozygous dominant) plant is even smaller. Unfortunately, the double dose plants tend to have very unreliable foliage, so most hybridizers select against a double dose plant. For an example of such a plant, look for pictures of Senk's Bad Girl. If you are breeding for girl foliage, the smaller seedlings will be the most likely to show the trait. However, girl foliage does present itself early, so it

is easy to select seedlings for the trait with a high degree of accuracy.

Q: Can longifolia foliage be expressed in mini-sized plants?

A: I have seen some plants on the web that were described as being minis with longifolia foliage. The foliage was not as long and narrow as seen in standard-sized plants. I would have described the foliage as an elongated oval in shape. There were slight gaps between the individual leaves of the plants, suggesting that the longifolia trait was providing more spacing between the leaves. Longifolia foliage should inherit as a dominant genetic trait. It might be a good leaf trait to introduce into miniature plants to correct some of the "bunchy" foliage that sometimes develops with reduced plant size.

Q: Sometimes the blooms of my species plants show a dark stripe down the center of the petals, similar to the pattern seen in chimeras. Are these possible chimera plants?

A: I've seen the dark stripe you refer to show up in my species plants from time to time. I've not tried to take bloom stalk cuttings to try to capture the trait as a chimera. However, I've not seen the trait show up in subsequent flowering cycles like a chimera mutation would do. My best guess is that the stripes are produced by some change in the culture of the plant and are not a true genetic change.

“Perfectly Pittman” Video

This video chronicles the multiple hybrids, growing techniques, growing spaces and AVSA involvement of Hortense and Ray Pittman.



Jolly Orchid

**Available in the
AVSA Store.
DVD and Thumbdrive
format \$20**



Photo credit: Tatiana Pugacheva

PT-Kubinskii Tanets

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Hybridized by: T. Pugacheva
Standard



Photo credit: Belinda Thibodeaux

Cajun's Hot to Trot

2022 AVSA Convention Opening Ceremony New Introduction

Hybridized by: B. Thibodeaux
Standard

Groom, Groom, Groom

By Mary Schaeffer

When most people think of taking care of their African violet collection, they think about watering, repotting and fertilizing. Grooming is something that only comes into serious consideration when they are getting plants ready for a show. This is unfortunate because regular grooming can make the difference between a blue-ribbon winner and a plant that stays home.

Most growers will remove dead or fading flowers on a regular basis. This is something that should be done as soon as the flowers fade. The stalks of dead flowers are ugly. While it sounds easy enough, it's something you need to stay on top of.

Of course, the more serious growers, concerned primarily about their annual shows, keep their violets disbudded nearly year-round and don't have this problem. But for the rest of us, who like to enjoy their violets year-round, step one in a best practice violet growing regime should be the very regular removal of dead flowers.

Likewise, look for small, immature leaves below older leaves and remove them. This is very important when the plants are young. The small leaves were the first to emerge on the young plant, but they never grow larger. They have to be removed at some point if you want a strong, healthy plant, so remove them as soon as other leaves are growing above them to a larger size. They are easy to identify. They are typically the ones on the bottom that are smaller than those on the next row of leaves above them.

Also, on a regular basis, remove yellowing leaves. Again, these tend to be the bottom-most row. They detract from the strength of the plant. Also, they are unsightly. Remove them early on and your plants will be stronger. The plant's energy can

go into supporting healthy leaves and producing new ones.

On a regular basis,
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leaves. They detract
from the strength of
the plant.

Lastly, be on the lookout for suckers. Suckers are those secondary side shoots that, left alone, soon produce another full crown, ruining the symmetry of the rosette of leaves. Once removed, suckers may be rooted to produce another plant. However, they sap energy from the primary crown. Until separated, both crowns will produce fewer flowers.

The trick with suckers is to distinguish them from bloom stalks. When they are quite small, that may take a little detective work. Look closely at the emerging growth (between the leaf axils). If it has only two leaves, it may be a bloom stalk. Once it has three or more, it is definitely a sucker.

Carefully remove the sucker, for if you are not careful, you might damage the mother plant. The smaller the sucker, the easier it is to remove. You may use a dull pencil, a small knife, your fingernails or my favorite: a tool called a sucker plucker.

Every week or two, look at your plants. Pick up each African violet and look at it closely for spent flowers, small leaves, yellowed leaves and suckers. Remove all of them.

Washing Your Plants

While we don't really grow violets for their foliage, the leaves on a well-grown violet can be quite beautiful. That doesn't happen without some effort. Think about your home. No matter how good your housekeeping is, eventually dust gets in. And dust doesn't discriminate. It lands equally on all surfaces, including the space where your violets live. Left unchecked, that dust will block the pores of the foliage and leave the plants with an overall dull appearance.

Removing that grime is relatively easy. Wash your plants. Don't use a dusting product (it's oily). Also, washing is much easier if you do it when the plant is not in bloom.

Take the plant to your sink and give it a good spritzing. If your sink has a sprayer attachment, you may use that. If not, mist the plant using a plastic sprayer bottle, being careful not to break leaves. The water should be room temperature or warmer, but of course not scalding hot. Give each plant a nice, gentle shower, making sure you thoroughly cover every leaf.

Since you've already got the plant at the sink, this might be a good time to leach the soil as well. This involves pouring a cup (or more) of clear, plain water into the top of the pot and through the roots to help rid it of any fertilizer salts that may have built up in the pot. This is especially important if you bottom water.

Don't let the plant stand in the water that drains off the plant, for violets don't like wet feet. You might check the center of the crown to make sure no water has settled in there. Gently dab the excess water up with a tissue to remove it.

If you are growing under lights, you may return the plants whenever you want to their usual location, since the moisture on the leaves is unlikely to cause any damage. If you grow in natural light, however, let the plants dry thoroughly before returning them to a window with direct sunlight.

Spend a little time grooming each of your plants on a regular basis and they'll repay you by blooming their heads off — and isn't that why we grow them?

Growing Tip

"Many violet growers choose a wick-watering method because it is less time consuming. Wick-ing also allows growers to get away for a week or more on vacation. Before switching to wick watering, experiment on an 'ordinary' violet for a month before switching all African violets to a new watering system. If your violet seems too wet or

develops root rot, amend your potting mix by adding more coarse perlite. Wick watering works because of capillary action. Water must be in the reservoir at all times. The wick must be moist. The potting medium must be moist." —AVSA Growing Tips email newsletter



Family Portrait: *Nematanthus tessmannii* 'Iporanga'

By Paul Kroll

Email: pfkroll@me.com

The COVID pandemic had some positive side effects. My plant friends and I have exchanged some very interesting cuttings and plants through the U.S. mail in order to satisfy our desire for something new to grow. One of the most unusual plants came from my friend Alcie Maxwell, who lives in Louisiana. Alcie received seed of *Nematanthus tessmannii* 'Iporanga' from the Brazil plants overseen by Mauro Peixoto. He told me the seeds germinated easily.

Nematanthus is an epiphytic genus that grows in its natural habitat in the crotches of tree branches. The other gesneriads in that epiphytic category are *Columnnea* and *Aeschynanthus*. These plants prefer to get watered and have the water drain off rather quickly, similar to orchids. The starter plant I received was potted in my regular soil mix. I water it thoroughly once a week and dump off the saucer where the pot sits. When my plant becomes rather pot-bound, I water again mid-week to keep it from drying out completely. So far, that has kept my plant growing nicely and producing blooms consistently, although not in abundance.



All photos by Alcie Maxwell.

Most *Nematanthus* take the hanging basket form, which are available in garden centers labeled “goldfish plant.” One can easily see why that term has been applied because of the shape of their blooms.

Most *Nematanthus* we see take the hanging basket form, which are often available in garden centers labeled “goldfish plant.” These popular names are unfortunate in many ways, but one can easily see why that term has been applied to them, because of the shape of their blooms. *N. tessmannii* 'Iporanga', however, has an upright growth pattern. This can be an advantage as the mature plant takes up less space on your light stand's shelf. My plant has grown to about 10 to 12 inches in height. Both Alcie and I grow this hybrid under four T8 bulbs, or in his case, the equivalent of that light intensity.

The foliage is very typical of all the Nematanthus I have seen: shiny leaves all along the stems, whether vining or upright in growth habit. These plants can develop stems that are quite woody and will often lose their leaves closer to the bottom of those woody stems. The upper length of the stems will remain clothed in foliage, and the blooms will form along those lengths and up to the tips.

Propagation is relatively easy from stem cuttings, but I would caution that the cuttings chosen should be young and not the older, woody stems. Those do not root as easily as the younger, greener stems. Watching your plant and taking cuttings to start a new plant is a good idea. The old plant will eventually become too woody to appear as a pleasant exhibit, whether for show or your own pleasure.

I have often used Nematanthus blossoms in flower arrangements in gesneriad shows. They hold up well if taken from a plant that has been watered regularly and not dried out. They can be glued with a hot glue gun to any other material in your design. They also work very well in underwater designs. The stems with foliage and blooms can be used easily as well. Tiny rooted cuttings can be used very effectively in container garden plantings and are quite attractive.

If you have not grown Nematanthus, you should give them a fair try. They will reward you with beautiful foliage and blooms throughout the year when grown under the proper conditions.





Photo credit: Elena Korshunova

EK-Rus' Iasnoglazaia

2022 AVSA Convention Opening Ceremony New Introduction

Hybridized by: E. Korshunova
Standard



Photo credit: Natalia Skorniakova

RM-Dzhina

2022 AVSA Convention Opening Ceremony New Introduction

Hybridized by: N. Skorniakova
Standard

How To Make a Kokedama Moss Ball

By Debbie Kirkpatrick

Editor's note: This is the second in our series on unusual vessels for African violets. The article was originally published on the Missouri Botanical Garden website. View it online for a step-by-step tutorial with photographs at www.missouribotanicalgarden.org.

Kokedama is the Japanese art of growing plants in a moss-covered ball of soil wrapped with string or monofilament fishing line. They can be displayed on a decorative surface or hung by string in a window.



Kokedama moss balls make an attractive vessel for African violets. If desired, tie them with fishing line for a cleaner appearance. Photo credit: Sophia Bennett.

Plants with small root systems or that are slow growing do well in kokedama, so African violets are a natural choice. What follows is a step-by-step guide on how to create and care for your own kokedama. Creating a beautiful string garden or decorative display for your home is fun and easy.

Materials

- Peat moss
- Measuring cup
- Potting soil

- Bowl or bucket
- Sphagnum sheet moss
- Waxed string or fishing line
- Scissors
- Gloves

Directions

To make a 4-inch ball, measure 2 cups of potting soil into a bowl or bucket. Slowly add water to the potting soil until it just holds together when pressed firmly; more water can be added later if necessary.

With gloves on, press the soil mixture into a ball, firmly packing so it stays together. If you toss it into the air a few times, it should hold together.

Remove the plant from its pot and gently shake off as much soil as you can.

Split the ball in half and lay the plant's roots in the center. Then, gently pack the ball of soil around the plant.

Dampen the sphagnum moss in warm water to make it pliable so you can wrap it around the soil ball. Lay the sheet moss face down, set the soil ball in the center and gather the moss around the soil and up to the plant.

The moss ball is now ready to be tied to keep it all together. Secure the moss with the waxed string or monofilament fishing line. Begin by holding the ball in one hand. With the other hand, start wrapping the ball, leaving a long tail at the bottom to tie off when you're done wrapping. Wrap in all directions. If you want to hang your kokedama, start wrapping the ball at the top, still leaving a long tail, and tie the ends to hang. If you don't want to hang your kokedama, you can place it in a shallow dish for display.

Caring for Your Kokedama

Water your kokedama by soaking it in a small bowl of water for five to 10 minutes or until it feels heavy. Repeat when the ball feels light — usually every couple of days. Fertilize every few

weeks with a water-soluble fertilizer in the water bowl. If the plant has grown large and starts to look stressed even though you are watering and fertilizing, it may be time to move the plant to a larger ball.

2022 Article Contest—

The Benefits of Condiment Cups

By Paul Kilroy

Email: onpilgrimage8512@yahoo.com

During the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic, I had difficulty finding those white Solo cups many amateur growers use for African violet leaf propagation, so I explored some other disposable dinnerware alternatives. I decided to try using 4-ounce plastic condiment cups. I found that the 4-ounce size is perfect for starting individual leaves from standard African violets, and they also serve as a great interim-sized pot for growing on single plantlets separated from the parent leaf until they are large enough to warrant a standard 4-inch African violet pot.

What I particularly like about these condiment cups is that they have a broader base and are proportionately squatter in comparison to Solo cups. Their dimensions provide for a wider soil surface area, which facilitates an improved oxygen exchange in the growing medium used for rooting plants.

Condiment cups come in several opaque colors, but I prefer to use the transparent ones because they allow me to easily monitor any root development

visually through the side of the cup without having to disturb the plant. Also, because plantlets in these broader-based condiment cups sit lower than those in Solo cups, they don't tip readily. This translates to easier transportation of leaf-pots and developing young plants to your club, shows or plant sales.

Last of all, these condiment cups also come in a 2-ounce size and even a 3/4-ounce size (labeled as souffle cups). The 2-ounce cups are perfect for starting mini and micromini African violets, as well as other more diminutively sized gesneriads such as petrocosmeas and certain primulinas. The 3/4-ounce souffle cups I primarily use for micro-miniature sinningias, which can very easily live out their entire life in one of these little cups. I tray and dome all my condiment-cupped plants and top water only (just a preference). I find that even a tray of domed starts in the smaller 2-ounce cups will easily go a week before watering is again needed.



Photo credit: Belinda Thibodeaux

Cajun's Solaris

2022 AVSA Convention Opening Ceremony New Introduction

Hybridized by: B. Thibodeaux
Standard



Photo credit: S. Covolo

***Streptocarpus* 'Steffano's Party Dress'**

2022 AVSA Convention Opening Ceremony New Introduction

Hybridized by: Stephen Covolo

What's In a Name?

By Dr. Jeff Smith

Email: jsmith4@bsu.edu

I received an interesting question related to the naming of African violets: "In looking at the revised *AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors and Judges*, I noticed that the species *S. clone rupicolus* is now listed as *rupicola*, which was the original name. I think when the merging into *Streptocarpus* came about, it was originally thought that there was a *Streptocarpus* species named *rupicola*, therefore the *Saintpaulia* species name was changed to *rupicolus*. There is no *Streptocarpus* species with that name, thus the *Saintpaulia* species name was corrected." This was my explanation for the apparent inconsistencies.

Afroviola: When African violets were moved under the genus *Streptocarpus*, there was a problem with the species *Saintpaulia pusilla*, as there was already a *Streptocarpus pusilla*. That plant was named earlier than the African violet *pusilla* and therefore had precedence. A replacement species name of *afroviola* was suggested; literally Latin for "African violet." The term *viola* is the genus name for violets and is a noun. I'm presuming that although species names are usually adjectives, the word *afroviola* was considered a noun, not the usual adjective used for a species name. As a "noun," the gender agreement between genus and species was exempted and the noun name of *viola* was conserved. Therefore, you have the apparent inconsistency between the endings with *Streptocarpus* and *afroviola*.

Confusa: The use of clone names is strictly an internal label used by the AVSA following the recommendation of Barbara Pershing, Bill Price and myself. We recommended to the AVSA Board of Directors to use clone names to conserve the locations and identity of the various species plants rather than lumping them all together under a

single species or subspecies name. For example, plants that were from the Mather collection were given names using Anne Robertson's labels such as cl. Mather EE. Where the spelling of the name had changed for gender agreement between genus and species, we suggested that the clone name follow the same spelling. Therefore, *rupicola* became *rupicolus* for species, subspecies and clone name. The species name of *confusa* was not conserved as a species or subspecies name. Since clone names are only for AVSA use, there wasn't a need to change the spelling. We suggested that in cases such as this, the old original spelling be conserved for familiarity to the AVSA membership. Therefore, *confusa* remained as *confusa*.

When the taxonomic changes were coming up in the scientific community, the AVSA was faced with a choice about how to respond. The AVSA is tasked with the naming and registration of the African violet hybrids, but we like to give registration numbers to the species plant for the AVSA shows. The choices were to:

1. Lump all of the species together under a single name: This approach is the simplest, as one name covers all of the different plants under the same name, but it loses the history and genetic diversity of plants collected from different locations.
2. Create a system that keeps a clone name with each different collection: This approach is more challenging because of the number of names created, but it does preserve the history and genetic diversity of the species plants.

The recommendation that Barbara Pershing, Bill Price and I made to the AVSA was to use clone names to preserve the genetic diversity. The abbreviation cl. or clone refers to a plant that has

been reproduced asexually from a wild collected plant. Clone names can follow collection numbers, such as with the Uppsala plants, or names/numbers given to plants by an authority, such as Anne Robertson did with the Sylvia Mather collection. Other plants, such as cl. *grandifolius* 237, follow the collection numbers given to plants by other individuals. The clone name varies but tries to link the plant to the source or original of the plant as closely as possible.

Clone names are not really part of the scientific Latin name for the plants, but instead represent an attempt of the AVSA to track the sources of the many species plants that are being grown and maintain the genetic diversity of the plants. Yes, we pay a price by having longer names on the labels, but we keep a rich resource and history as the taxonomic status has collapsed from many species to just a few. The Gesneriad Society uses a similar system for some genera, but it is not necessary for others.

One of the changes with the placement of African violets into genus *Streptocarpus* was correcting the gender of the Latin between the new genus name and the species name. For example, *ionantha* became *ionanthus*. The gender changes affected a number of the species and subspecies (see the *afroviola* description above). Since clone names are not official scientific names, but are at the convenience of the AVSA, we can have more freedom in the word. However, where the ending changed for gender agreement, we decided to also change the clone name to make all of the names agree. For example, species *grandifolia* became the subspecies *grandifolius* and all the clones follow the same *grandifolius* spelling. This may seem a bit confusing, but there really was a plan or pattern for the clone names.

Clone names are not really part of the scientific Latin name for the plants, but instead represent an attempt of the AVSA to track the sources of the many species plants that are being grown and maintain the genetic diversity of the plants.

Like all changes, the new taxonomic system has been slow to be adopted, but more and more people are getting familiar with the naming system and the use of clone names. I try to use the new names as much as possible, but I will admit using the older names for convenience, especially if an old name was used in a question I've received. As long as both parties are clear on the plant being discussed, I'm good with being a bit flexible with informal communication.

Commercial Member Profile: Nadeau African Violet Seeds

By Sophia Bennett

Email: editor@avsa.org

Most people who start African violets do so from cuttings. But those who can't access leaves or crowns, or who want to experiment with growing them from seeds, should consider visiting Nadeau African Violet Seeds and purchasing them from Ronn Nadeau. He and his wife, Katsuko, own the only business producing African violet seeds in the world.



Ronn and Katsuko Nadeau. All photos provided by Nadeau African Violet Seeds.

Nadeau traces his affection for African violets to time spent with his grandmother during his childhood. She was an avid gardener who tended to her violets when she wasn't planting, weeding and harvesting fruits and vegetables. His grandmother grew all of her veggies from seed, and Nadeau developed a fascination with these small bits of biology at a young age. It became his career; after getting a doctorate in chemistry, he worked for the agricultural giant Monsanto for decades. (Gardening remains one of his main hobbies, along with photography.)

But despite all of his knowledge about seeds, he continued to propagate African violets from

cuttings as a young man. "At some point, I started asking the question, why don't I do this from seed?" he says. He learned how to pollinate his plants and create seed pods. "That excited me and got me interested in seeing if I could get other people interested in African violets from seed. At the time, if you said you were growing African violets from seed, people looked at you and said, 'That can't be true.'"

Growing African violets from seed is easy, explains Nadeau, if a person follows some easy instructions. Most importantly, "If there isn't fertilizer in the germination medium, the seeds will germinate but they will not grow, not even a millimeter. When a customer reports no germination or no growth, I suggest they mist the soil surface with a fertilizer solution, and usually that starts them growing."

People struggling to grow from seed can read detailed instructions about how to do it on his website. He also suggests they buy Jiffy Mix Natural and Organic Seed Starting Mix, available online and at box stores. He promises to refund customers their total cost if they are not satisfied with the seeds or his service.

Nadeau turned 80 this year and doesn't expect to run the business for another ten years. As he reflects on his legacy, he says one of the things he's most proud of is making African violets available to people in countries where they're not otherwise available. "People all over the world are able to grow my seeds and produce African violets and maybe get hobbies started wherever they are," he says — even if they can't get cuttings from a friend or at a show. He's shipped seeds to at least 150 countries,

including the tiny island nation of Reunion in the middle of the Indian Ocean. “They ought to call me Ronnie Violetseed,” he quips.

Though Nadeau has no immediate plans to sell the business, “I’m working on an article that attempts to tell everything I know about how to make African violet seeds and sell them globally. No secrets!” That article will appear in November/December issue of *African Violet Magazine*. He hopes this knowledge will inspire someone to carry on his tradition and continue to make African violet seeds available to the world.



Ronn and Katsuko grow out as many crosses as they can. This shows two trays of small seedlings. Using colors is very helpful for keeping track of plants in various crosses and places later on.




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Winning Species:

Streptocarpus rupicolus cl. Kacharoroni

By Dale Martens

Email: dalemartens@mchsi.com

Streptocarpus rupicolus cl. Kacharoroni, grown by Bob Clark, was named Best Saintpaulia Species at this year's Gesneriad Society Convention.

When I asked Clark about his advice for growing it, he shared these thoughts: "It does like regular repotting, and it doesn't mind it. Some species are picky about that and dislike having their roots disturbed. Not so with this one. It is one of the easiest species I've grown. It does take up room, though, and it gets big. I think it is worth it, though."

This clone is sometimes referred to as *S. rupicolus* cl. Robertson. I asked Dr. Jeff Smith to clear up the confusion.

"There are two acceptable clone names in my opinion," he says. "One is Kacharoroni, which is the

name for the collection location, a river or river valley. The other clone name I would accept is Robertson, after botanist Anne Robertson, who documented the species collection of the late Sylvia Mather. I believe Genola Cox sold the plant under the Robertson name before the plant was confirmed to a species. It has been offered most frequently under the latter clone name, probably because it is easier for most Americans to spell.

"Ms. Robertson actually described two collection sites for this plant (two clones), but they have become hopelessly intermingled under the same name. I am no longer confident that both clones are still in collection and if so, how to tell them apart. Anne mentioned the two sites but didn't give many details on telling the two apart."





Photo credit: Galina Lazarenko

LiK-Miroslava

2022 AVSA Convention Opening Ceremony New Introduction

Hybridized by: G. Lazarenko
Standard

Culture, Pathogen or Pest?

By Joyce Stork

Email: joycestork@avsa.org

Are you trying to solve a problem in your African violet collection? Is it a problem with your culture, a pathogen (disease) or a pest? It's helpful to narrow down the choices!

I've found it useful to use a diagnostic strategy which categorizes the problem first, before moving on to explore the precise source of the trouble. Doing so saves time as you focus on the symptoms within just one category.

Look at the Big Picture

When trying to diagnose an ailing violet, consider when and how symptoms first appeared. Did symptoms occur in a consistent, general way (indicating culture) or were they quite random (indicating insects or possibly disease)? Did they affect a whole area (culture) or just one shelf?

If the problem is occurring in a small area, what factors could be at work?

- Has the general growing area been well controlled regarding temperature, light, humidity, etc.?
- Was this a space where a fixture was changed, where new potting mix was used or where a chemical was used?
- Could a pet or family member have caused the problem?

Next, consider the timing. Did the onset of symptoms coincide with changes made in your culture?

- Were there changes or events in the growing area within the last six months, such as moving, remodeling or repairs?
- Within the last three months, has there been a change in the use of chemicals, potting mix, water or fertilizer? Were windows and doors left open, making it possible for pests to fly in? Have you smelled gas or had smoke in the area?

- In recent weeks, was there a big weather change that wasn't controlled in the growing area, an extreme dry-out before watering or a change in light? Even a change that happened in a relatively short period — an overnight temperature drop that caused high humidity, watering with very cold water or an hour with direct sunshine or high heat — could lead to dramatic changes in our plants.

Culture affects nearly everything in a common growing area at about the same time, so if the problem is culture, many plants will show symptoms. Culture also affects general vigor, pattern of growth and speed of cell division. If your culture is off, you will find plants that are not growing like they used to, or that have growth breaks such as changes in the foliage size or vigor from the center of the crown to the outside leaves.

Pathogens or pests often affect small areas or isolated plants at first and then spread as time passes. Symptoms may be random. You may have isolated problems occurring in adjacent plants or in far-separated plants, but with healthy, unaffected plants in between. Pests don't behave predictably, so the damage may be spread out. Air, both currents and dead spots, often determine where disease will develop. Pet, people and pot movement can have a similar effect.

Once you have analyzed the big picture, it will be easier to understand the symptoms you are observing. The next step is to consider the symptoms to narrow down the possibilities.

Symptoms of Cultural Problems

These symptoms *are probably* related to culture:

- Changes or fading in the color or pattern of green on leaves can be caused by excessive light,

poor nutrition, pH issues, inadequate mycorrhizae, ammonium toxicity or cold roots.

- Variegation changes may be the result of temperature changes, poor nutrition or excessive light.
- Open growth patterns are often related to light, temperature or fertilizer.
- Tight growth or change in leaf size and petiole length may be due to temperature and poor nutrition.
- Marks on leaves that have a net pattern can be the result of cold-water shock, either from cold water on the roots or cold water standing on leaves.
- General limpness of the entire plant may result from very dry roots, intense cold or heat damage.
- Burned leaf edges may mean excess fertilizer salts, uneven watering or low humidity.
- Orange crud on the center of the crown, especially in young plants, indicates fertilizer salts in the soil are migrating into the crown.
- Water-filled bumps on leaves or water-soaked splotches on the underside of leaves are indications of edema caused by excess water inside the plant. This usually occurs when there is high humidity and when plants are watered late in the day.

These symptoms *might be* related to culture:

- Stunted center growth may result if there is a gas leak or pollutant, if pH is too low or if temperatures are too cool.
- Brittle and cupping leaves may result from cool temperatures or a zinc deficiency.
- Growth breaks might be caused by a change of seasons, temperature, light or nutrient, or may follow a chemical treatment.
- Many tiny spots could be the result of using a spray applicator or water condensation on leaves, especially when plants are watered in the early morning hours.
- Failure to bloom could result from low humidity, poor light or poor nutrition. Uneven watering, pollutants and dry air may also be factors.
- Marks, cracks, cuts and brown spots may result from physical injuries caused by rough handling or shipping.
- Faded blossom color may be caused by warm growing temperatures.

- Sudden collapse of leaves might be root damage caused by uneven or overwhelming watering.
- Sudden onset of tiny flowers may occur if roots are disturbed (repotting, using a chemical drench or shipping) when buds have formed.
- Spots that wipe off are probably residue from chemicals or water marks.
- Jelly-like stems near the rim of clay pots may be caused by salt buildup in the clay.

Most cultural problems can be resolved by changing the environment or the methods being used. Many pathogen and pest issues can be eliminated with improved cultural controls.

Symptoms Related to Pathogens

These symptoms *are probably* related to pathogens:

- Visible fuzzy mold, slime or powder on plant tissue (especially if it increases in size) can be attributed to diseases such as botrytis, slime mold or powdery mildew.
- Rotting of the crown, the base of the leaf petiole or in roots is usually caused by one of the rot diseases such as pythium, phytophthora or rhizoctonia.

These symptoms *might be* related to pathogens:

- Stunting of center growth or poor flower color may be botrytis blossom blight.
- Necrotic or water-soaked brown patches on leaves may be bacterial soft rot, corynespora or fusarium.
- Outer leaves wilting suddenly may occur because of root rot.
- A wide variety of odd symptoms on one plant, including target or pinpoint spots, distortions in growth, stunting and lack of vigor may be the result of impatiens necrotic spot virus (INSV), especially if you've had an outbreak of thrips.
- Mycelium on leaves sometimes occurs with crown rot.
- Pitted cells on leaf surface may result from powdery mildew.

Pathogenic problems require 1) isolating and removing the diseased plant tissue, 2) a change in the environment to discourage the development of disease and 3) the proper fungicide or bactericide to control the disease. A plant pathologist may be needed to identify less-familiar pathogens.

Symptoms Related to Pests

These symptoms *are probably* related to pests:

- Movement, such as crawling larvae, flying bugs or a slight wiggle, indicate the presence of thrips, mealybugs or fungus gnats.
- Cottony white nests between leaf hairs, in leaf axils or swirled in the soil are a sign of foliar or soil mealybugs.
- Sticky residue typically means aphids, scale or white flies are present.
- The sudden appearance of white debris on leaves (which can be easily removed) indicates young aphids that briefly swarmed in to shed skin.
- Chew marks or path marks across leaves can indicate cockroaches, mice, caterpillars or leaf miners.
- Knots on roots suggest the problem is root knot nematodes, especially when garden soil was used for potting.

These symptoms *might be* related to pests:

- Irregular growth, recurved leaves, and puckers on leaves or blossoms often indicate mites (broad, cyclamen or spider).
- Stunting in the center of the crown may be caused by cyclamen mites.
- Hairiness often results when cyclamen mites are present.
- Leaves that are rolled under or very brittle and cracked may indicate broad mites.
- Outer leaves wilting may be the result of soil mealybugs or root knot nematodes.
- Spilled pollen on petals or unexpected seed pods often occur when thrips are present.
- Fine webbing may indicate spider mites.
- Speckled leaves might be the result of spider mites or white flies feeding on cells.
- Tiny flowers may be caused by cyclamen mites feeding on buds.

Pest problems require 1) isolating suspicious plants, 2) physical removal of pests when possible, 3) the appropriate pesticide strategy to control and eradicate the pest, and 4) preventative controls to keep pests away.

Maybe There's No Reason to Panic

Sometimes a "symptom" is simply a varietal trait. If you see these "problems" on your plants, do

some research and find out if they're common for that specific cultivar:

- Unusual blossom or variegation color
- Rate of growth slower or faster than typical
- Tendency to sucker, bloom heavily or produce double flower stems
- Long or short petiole and peduncles
- Pollen shed
- Sensitivity to specific light, humidity and/or temperature conditions
- Resistance to pests or disease

Beneficial insects, mites and bacteria actually help us. Springtails and other fungus-feeding insects and soil mites are often not dangerous and actually quite useful. The presence of white mold on the soil in a potted plant may indicate the presence of mycorrhizae, a beneficial bacterium. Use discretion before treating these with chemicals.

When to Seek Professional Help

Some problems are so common to growers that they become easy to diagnose and treat. African violets are commonly subject to powdery mildew and various root rot diseases, or infested with thrips, soil and foliar mealy bugs, aphids and mites. Information is readily available.

Diseases or pests that are less common or more regional in nature often require expert help. Seek out a plant pathologist or entomologist at your state agricultural extension service. As an alternative, contact a large commercial nursery to ask the greenhouse manager for advice in finding the right professional.

Isolate plants with pathogens or pests so they do not infect other plants, but avoid treating them until you have a reliable diagnosis. Using the proper treatment will save money and keep both you and your violets safer.

Good Resources for Further Study

1. Cole, Charles L., "Insect and Mite Pests of African Violets." 1994. African Violet Society of America.
2. Daughtrey, Margery, Wick, Robert L. and Peterson, Joseph L., "Compendium of Flowering Potted Plant Diseases." 1995. American Phytopathological Society.



Photo credit: Elena Korshunova

EK-Vino iz Oduvanchikov

2022 AVSA Convention Opening Ceremony New Introduction

Hybridized by: E. Korshunova

Standard

Unusual African Violet Bloom

By Joe Meyer

Email: joescritters@outlook.com

I found this African violet in a small nursery. After seeing the uniqueness of the high number of extra petals, I had to have it. I talked to one of the owners to find out more about it.



He said this particular violet has been in their collection for some time. It appeared as a sport

and they have been keeping it going ever since. He didn't remember what plant produced the violet. They propagate all their violets from leaf cuttings, and it has been blooming true ever since, which would rule out it being a chimera even though it has the pinwheel stripes.

The blue color in the blossoms is highly variable, and the Geneva edge is only on the bottom petals, which makes it even more interesting. The number of petals on the bottom range from three to five. The top petals range from five to eight in number. To me, it looks like two blossoms got mashed together,

making for a very unique African violet.

African Violet Magazine Article and Column Deadlines

- January/February issue: November 1
- March/April issue: January 1
- May/June issue: March 1
- July/August issue: May 1
- September/October issue: July 1
- November/December issue: September 1

We would love to hear from you! Please send articles or article ideas for the *AVM* to Sophia Bennett at editor@avsa.org.

SAVE THE DATE!

MEET US IN ATLANTA IN 2023



African Violet Society of America
Annual Convention and Show
"WHERE IT ALL BEGAN"
MAY 28 – JUNE 4, 2023

Show and salesroom OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:
Friday, June 2, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. | Saturday, June 3, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Sheraton Atlanta Hotel
165 Courtland St. NE, Atlanta, GA 30303

Atlanta, Georgia: Where It All Began

By Randy G. Deutsch

Email: fundraising@avsa.org

The setting was the Ansley Hotel in downtown Atlanta, built in 1913. Five thousand guests attended the opening of the \$1 million property. Beginning in 1930, this grand hotel also hosted the studios of radio station WGST. In 1939, the hotel had 400 rooms, each with *en suite* bathrooms and a radio. In 1964, the city of Atlanta presented civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. with a historic congratulatory banquet (Atlanta's first biracial formal dinner) in the hotel's magnificent ballroom after he received the Nobel Peace Prize.

On October 7, 1947, Anne Tinari and Lilian Jarrett were off to the very first AVSA Annual Convention at none other than the historic Ansley Hotel. Frank Tinari needed to stay home, as he was working on the greenhouse expansion, so the women arrived by train. Once at the show, they found out they needed to take their entries to the Municipal Auditorium Annex. There, they met many delightful people they had been corresponding with: Charles Hudson, H. G. Harvey, Professor W. D. Holley and, of course, Boyce Edens.

The official dates of that very first convention were October 9 and 10. The grand opening of the show was at 2:30 p.m. and it's reported that members stood in line for quite a while to get that first breathless look inside the show-room. (Some things haven't changed.) Harvey, who in later years was president of the society, exhibited the best plant in the show, *Ionantha grandiflora*.

It's with great joy that AVSA will hold its next Annual Convention in downtown Atlanta. The dates are May 28 through June 4, 2023. We will be at

the Sheraton Atlanta Hotel at 165 Courtland St. NE. The show and sales rooms will be open to the public Friday, June 2 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday, June 3 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Mark your calendars now and plan to join in all of the festivities!

This amazing hotel offers a distinctive and relaxing environment with amenities like a fitness center and an indoor pool with a retractable roof. They make it easy to relax with floor-to-ceiling windows that provide courtyard views.

There are two places within the hotel to grab some food or libations. The Market is a coffee-house located on the third floor and features individually packaged meals, continental grab-and-go options and Starbucks coffee, specialty and blended drinks. It is open from 6:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. Fandangles is an American bar also located on the third floor and features an assortment of craft beers and small-batch bourbon drinks. It serves a light bar menu featuring a smash burger, wings, salads and flatbreads. It is open from 5 to 10 p.m. except Friday and Saturday, when it stays open until midnight.

There is also an assortment of different kinds of restaurants near the hotel. Here are some choices within a few blocks:

crazyAtlanta — 182 Courtland St. NE. This Mexican restaurant is open for lunch and dinner with a casual dress code.

Nikolai's Roof — 255 Courtland St. NE. Located on the 30th floor of the Hilton Hotel, this dinner-only restaurant has French and Russian cuisine and amazing views.

Gus's World Famous Fried Chicken — Peachtree Center, 231 W. Peachtree St. NW. This is a must-visit restaurant that serves fried chicken and other diner favorites.

Truva — 842 N. Highland Ave. NE. This Turkish restaurant serves wonderful Mediterranean lunches and dinners.

Aviva by Kameel Mediterranean Grill — 756 W. Peachtree St NW. Visit this restaurant for fresh, tasty Middle Eastern meals.

Cuts Steakhouse — 60 Andrew Young International Blvd. NE. This eatery sells upscale southern cuisine in a classy but casual setting.

What else to do in downtown Atlanta? If you are looking for family entertainment, you could visit the Center for Puppetry Arts three miles away. How about the world's largest aquarium, the Georgia Aquarium, with over 55,000 freshwater

fish and mammals? It is just 1.3 miles away. The Atlanta Zoo is just 2.3 miles away. And, of course, at the heart of downtown Atlanta is Centennial Olympic Park, with its centerpiece Fountain of Rings. Other nearby sights include the College Football Hall of Fame, the Center for Civil and Human Rights, and the World of Coca-Cola.

Want to do something different? Get a sky-high view of the city by riding the SkyView Atlanta gondola, which goes 20 stories up. It's a thrilling view during the day and a breathtaking sight at night. You'll see everything from Stone Mountain Park to Midtown's Georgia Tech campus.

Everyone is busy and working hard to make your convention trip to Atlanta a great "homecoming" for all members of AVSA. We look forward to seeing each of our violet family members in Atlanta for the 2023 convention as we go back to "Where It All Began."



Downtown Atlanta. Photo credit: Gene Phillips, courtesy of ACVB and AtlantaPhotos.com.

2023 AVSA Special Awards List

By Vickie Crider

Email: conventionawards@avsa.org

At each AVSA Convention, the society gives out numerous special awards that are generously sponsored by clubs, companies and individuals. This is the list of awards planned to date. If you or your

club would like to donate to the 2023 award fund, there is still time! Please contact me. A complete list of AVSA Special Awards will be available on the convention website next year.

■ Specified Awards — Amateur Division Collection

- \$300 Best Holtkamp Collection
Holtkamp Greenhouses
Reinhold Holtkamp (TN)
- \$200 2nd Best Holtkamp Collection
Holtkamp Greenhouses
Reinhold Holtkamp (TN)
- \$100 3rd Best Holtkamp Collection
Holtkamp Greenhouses
Reinhold Holtkamp (TN)
- \$200 Best Robinson Collection
The Violet Barn
Dr. Ralph and Olive Robinson (NY)
- \$100 2nd Best Robinson Collection
The Violet Barn
Reinhold Holtkamp (TN)
- \$200 Best Buckeye Collection
Pat Hancock (OH)
- \$100 2nd Best Buckeye Collection
Pat Hancock (OH)
- \$300 Best Russian Collection
Tatiana and Vladimir Kalgin (Russia)
- \$200 2nd Best Russian Collection
Tatiana and Vladimir Kalgin (Russia)
- \$100 3rd Best Russian Collection
Tatiana and Vladimir Kalgin (Russia)
- \$200 Best Lyon's Collection
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses
Paul Sorano (NY)
- \$100 2nd Best Lyon's Collection
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses
Paul Sorano (NY)

■ Specific Variety Awards — Amateur Horticulture

- \$250 Best Cajun's Collection
Dr. Minh Bui (MD)
- \$25 Best Aca's Libbie
Bluebird Greenhouses
Tom and Libbie Glembocki (FL)
- \$50 Best Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler
Cincinnati AVS
Sandy McIntosh (KY)
- \$50 Best Buckeye Seductress
Pat Hancock (OH)
- \$25 Best Cabbage Patch
Terri Post (IA)
- \$25 Best Cajun Code Blue
Karen Buchanan (TN)
- \$100 Best Concord
Kazuo Horikoshi (Japan)
- \$50 Best Del's Spring Blush
Violet Reflection Group (IN)
(In Memory of Del Setchel)
- \$25 Best Everdina of Hans Inpijn
AVSA
Mary Corondan (TX)
- \$25 Best Hunter's Exit Wound
Karen Buchanan (TN)
- \$25 Best Maas' Janet
Janet Riemer (NJ)
- \$50 Best Jitterbug Breathless
Cincinnati AVS
Sandi McIntosh (OH)
- \$30 Best Buffalo Hunt
Tulsa AVS
Randy Deutsch (SD)

- \$25 Best LE Karusel
Stars N Streps
Steve and Donna Turner (SC)
- \$50 Best Lela Marie
Early Bird Violet Club
Brenda Posey (AL)
- \$25 Best Lonestar Lady
Anne Nicholas (TX)
(In Memory of Richard Nicholas)
- \$25 Best Lonestar Helen Mahr
Anne Nicholas (TX)
(In Memory of Richard Nicholas)
- \$25 Best Lonestar Snowstorm
Marge Savage (TX)
(In Memory of Richard Nicholas)
- \$25 Best Lonestar Twilight
Anne Nicholas (TX)
(In Memory of Richard Nicholas)
- \$25 Best Lyon's Rockin Romance
Cathleen Graves (WA)
- \$25 Best Tina (Maas)
Janet Riemer (NJ)

- \$25 Best Wrangler's Spanish Cavalier
Bluebird Greenhouses (FL)
Tom and Libbie Glembocki
- \$20 Best Marching Band
Karyn Cichocki (NJ)
(In Memory of Kent Stork)
- \$20 Best Rodeo Country
Spring Branch AVC
Teresa Kaminski (TX)

■ **Specified Awards —
Commercial Division Collection**

- \$300 Best Holtkamp Collection
Holtkamp Greenhouses
Reinhold Holtkamp (TN)
- \$200 2nd Best Holtkamp Collection
Holtkamp Greenhouses
Reinhold Holtkamp (TN)
- \$100 3rd Best Holtkamp Collection
Holtkamp Greenhouses
Reinhold Holtkamp (TN)

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It Takes a Village

By Rich Follett

Email: secretary@avsa.org

I have attended most of the AVSA conventions since I first discovered the world of African violets at “Mr. Violet Goes to Washington” in 2002. It took my first trip to an AVSA convention in my capacity as the AVSA Secretary to fully appreciate how much human initiative and how many hours of labor go into setting up the convention site before the conventioners arrive.

As secretary, I am required to be onsite on the Sunday before guests start arriving. From the moment I arrived on the scene, the area designated by the Little Rock Marriott for the convention was a veritable beehive of activity! Hotel workers were busily clearing the ballroom from the previous night’s event and preparing the layout that would become our showroom. Volunteers (including AVSA Board and Executive Committee members) were filling goodie bags in an assembly line that would have made Henry Ford proud. Our intrepid office manager, Amy Carruth, and her dedicated assistant, Stephanie Travis, were literally on their hands and knees in an anteroom preparing for the rush of registrants.

This activity was by no means limited to Sunday, either. The hustle and bustle continued for three days straight from morning until late into the evening. Using simple math, I saw at least forty people working diligently to make ready for the opening, and I would estimate that each worked a minimum of ten hours in those three days (some, many more). This suggests a minimum of 400 hours of volunteer labor onsite even before the first registrant picked up a welcome packet.

I once had an unforgettable theater professor who proudly told her students that every minute of a Broadway show represented a minimum of 100 hours of rehearsal and preparation from the cast, crew, designers and technicians. After seeing the preparation for “African Violets Go Hog Wild,” I daresay that the AVSA schedule operates on much the same formula. If you have the chance to interact with any of the convention planners or volunteers, let them know how much their efforts make a difference for all of us who enjoy the fruits of their labor.

Growing Tip

“I have found that adding 1/4 cup of Calgon anti-limescale liquid to the water in which I soak my dirty pots is a wonderful help. By softening the water, it seems to almost melt

away the fertilizer salts and other accumulated ‘stuff’ on the pots. I dump that soaking water and can literally wipe away any bits of accumulation easily.” —Paul Kroll

Report from a First-Time Convention Attendee

By Ann Athey

Email: aathey0070@aol.com

I attended the AVSA Annual Convention for the first time this year. Mary Corondan asked if I would share my experience so that anyone who hasn't attended a convention before will know what to expect.

I really had two things in mind when I started planning for the convention. I wanted to go away having learned some things, and I wanted to meet the people I'd been reading about and that my veteran club members talked about all the time. I definitely learned a lot. I went to the judging school with three other people from my club, the First African Violet Society of Denton, which was most of the day on Wednesday. I was pretty intimidated because I'm a new grower and I've only shown at a few shows, but I thought I'd audit the course and learn what the judges are looking for, which would help me be a better grower. Then I started toying with the idea of taking the test and becoming a judge, since I was going to go through this whole day.

The judging school was amazing. We learned so much. I felt like I was a sponge soaking it all up. All of us decided to take the judging exam, and thankfully, all of us passed. I loved that at the end of the day, we got to do a mock judging.

Before the trip, I offered to clerk for the convention show because I thought it would help me improve at showing and understand the processes better. I was assigned to the collections, and then I got to clerk for the final panel. The show judges were very helpful and knowledgeable. What an experience! I also brought plants to include in the show, and I learned so much from talking with the volunteers about what classes to enter my plants in.

A good part of my convention time was taken up by the school and clerking, but I still made it to a few of the workshops. I also attended the affiliates breakfast (I'm the vice president for education for my club and we wanted to hear about what other groups are doing), the awards banquet and the auction. Despite being outbid on all my favorite items, it was a blast.

My dear friend Anne Nicholas couldn't attend the convention, so I made videos of some of her friends saying hi and texted them to her. That was a way for me to meet some of my African violet heroes. I got to meet Joyce Stork and Bill Patterson and many other people.

One thing I wish I'd recalled reading is that I couldn't bring my show plants home until Saturday. We were leaving on Friday, so I spent a good part of one of my days trying to find someone to bring my violets home. Luckily, one of my club members stepped up and agreed to help me. I won't make that rookie mistake again.

I will absolutely go to convention again next year if I can make it. It was quite a learning experience and I had a great time. My advice for anyone attending for the first time is to really study the schedule. Have a plan in place of what you want to see and where you need to be when. I wrote everything down because there were so many things going on the same time, and I didn't want to miss a single thing that was high on my priority list.

In Memory

Jacquie Eisenhut

On July 14, Jacquie Eisenhut passed away after a long illness. Jacquie was a Master Judge in both AVSA and The Gesneriad Society. She was also Past President of the South Coast African Violet and Gesneriad Society Chapter and Past President of the Southern California Judges Council. She was a wonderful designer and won many blue ribbons, best in class ribbons and best design awards at local, regional and national shows. In addition to her designs, Jacquie also grew beautiful African violets and many gesneriads. Her newsletters featured either an African violet or gesneriad article each month. At our club meetings, she also published the winning picture from our monthly blossom contests for best violet and best gesneriad blooms. Jacquie is survived by her husband, children and many grandchildren.

Margaret Taylor



Margaret Taylor of Sydney, Australia, passed away peacefully on August 3. She was a leader in the Australian African violet community and a respected hybridizer internationally. She and her husband Doug were foundation members of three clubs in Australia: the African Violet-Gesneriad Society of New South Wales (1980), the Central Coast AVC (1981) and the African Violet Association of Australia (1981). Margaret's growing skills were well developed even then, and she won Queen of Show in 1982 at the first African Violet Association of Australia show.

It was after her husband's death and retirement from nursing that she began hybridizing in earnest. The AVSA Master Variety List includes 85 hybrids from Margaret Taylor. They are primarily standards, including some large standards. Her hybrids were characterized by compact, symmetrical growth and vibrant color. She wrote in the April/June 2015 *Chatter*, the journal of the African Violet Society of Canada, "I began hybridization out of necessity. We were having trouble with quarantine regulations and expenses for imports from the United States, so I decided to create my own hybrids. ... My main goal in hybridization is to create show plants with long-lasting flowers."

Ruth Coulson recalls, "She said that her most successful African violet hybrid was 'Flower Drum', as it won so many major awards around the country. While it would be interesting to consider which plants were her favorites, I think there may be too many to list. 'Fairy Gate', the color of which is softly beautiful, had a special place in her affections because the name had special associations for her. 'Red Delicious' is often spoken of as a plant worthy of growing and



Fairy Gate. Photo credit: Ruth Coulson.

showing, and then there is ‘Corroboree’, favorite for me, and possibly for Margaret herself.”

Margaret’s love of birds, animals and gardening (indoors and out) filled her retirement years. Her intelligence, wisdom and sense of humor endeared her to friends and fellow hybridizers around the world through social media. The African Violet Association of Australia wrote about Margaret, “She will be remembered as the lovely lady she was and especially for the beautiful plants she hybridized and grew. We will all miss her so much.”
—Joyce Stork



Photo credit: Tatiana Pugacheva

PT-Skandinavskaia Vesna

**2022 AVSA Convention
Opening Ceremony
New Introduction**

Hybridized by: T. Pugacheva
Standard



AV Creative Corner: Making an African Violet Greeting Card

By Rich Follett

Email: avcreativecorner@gmail.com

This AV Creative Corner features a guest artist: Carolee Carter of Ocala, Florida. Carolee graciously agreed to share her method of creating beautiful African violet greeting cards. She has also offered to give away a duplicate stamp to the one she used to make the card in our featured example! If you would like to win the stamp, please send an email with your name and address to avcreativecorner@gmail.com and I will enter your name into a random drawing to be held on September 30, 2022. The winner will be contacted via email. Good luck, everybody!

I would also like to feature some of your card designs in a future AV Creative Corner. Please send photos of your designs (300 dpi or larger, please) to avcreativecorner@gmail.com by September 30.

Here is Carolee's creative process, in her own words:

"I have been making cards for over 20 years and, as a result, have amassed a huge amount of supplies in my craft room. I visit all the craft shows in my area, where I always get inspired with new ideas. Rich asked me to describe my process of creating a card. This is a bit difficult to do if you

want to recreate it because you likely don't have the same supplies. Regardless, here is the process for the card that I'm sharing in this article.

"First, you have to have a stamp that you are going to use. Then you envision what you want to do with that stamp. You choose the background color of your card as well as other complementary shades of paper.

"For this card, I cut the cardstock 6 1/4 by 9 inches and folded it in half. Then, I cut the piece of graduated background paper 4 by 5 3/4 inches and, using the card tape, secured it to the front of the card.

"I stamped the image on cardstock and colored it with pencils. Using my Cuttlebug, I cut out the stamped image and background using the dies shown in the photo. I sprayed the violet with silver glitter, affixed it to the scalloped background and attached both to the background paper. Last, I used a glitter pen around the layers to add some sparkle!

"It's all about creativity — let your creative juices flow and have some fun!"



Evolution of Show Rules for Pots

By Sharon Rosenzweig

Email: srosenzw100@comcast.net

While making preparations for the 2015 Bay State African Violet show, the director of our venue made a request that all horticultural entries be placed in clay pots. Coming from an art background, she was looking for consistency in the display. After explaining to her that AVSA has certain requirements for show pots, and why African violet growers do not grow in clay pots, I became interested in the evolution of the show rules with respect to pots.

In the early days of AVSA, you could enter a plant in any type of container. According to Pat Hancock, the Best in Show plant in the first AVSA show in 1947 was exhibited in a small tub. Before the popularity of plastic flower pots, African violets were entered in clay pots. These were not ideal, as the plants dried out quickly and the petioles became damaged when in contact with the rim.

The 1960s saw a rise in popularity of plastic pots. Some folks were using plastic and some were still using clay. A rule was introduced requiring pots to be covered in foil with the dull side out to provide consistency for show plants. Pots could be any shape. Double potting, flare tops or supports were not permitted.

Self-watering planters made their appearance in the 1970s. The Aquamatic planter and Swift's Moist-Rite Planters were introduced in the early 1970s. In 1983, George (Clem) Oyama developed the Oyama planter. You could exhibit in these.

Through the 1980s, pots were still being covered with foil. In 1991, this requirement was changed. There was no need to cover pots with foil, but pots had to be white or slip-potted into white pots. Self-watering planters such as Moist-Rite and Oyamas could be used but had to be white.

John Cook related the story of the Washington, DC convention (in the 1990s). Due to Barbara's health, he was unable to attend to sell supplies. Usually, exhibitors using green pots came to him for white ones to slip-pot. The color rule was changed as a result of this convention to allow white, green or neutral-colored pots.

In 2015, the rules stated that pots could not be decorative but can be white, green or neutral. Self-watering Moist-Rite and Oyamas can be white, green, black or neutral. When slip-potting, the pot must be same size or slightly larger than the current pot. The bottom of the pot containing the plant must be covered with plastic or foil to prevent leakage onto the table covering. (Also, trailers, trailing species, trailing gesneriads and gesneriads in protective containers may be exhibited in the containers in which they are growing. This has always been the rule.)

Pat Hancock told me that at one time, the size requirement for semiminis and minis was such that if leaves were hanging down around the pot, they were not included in the diameter measurement. Only the leaves that were flat out in the rosette were measured for plant diameter. I'm glad this guideline was discontinued.

Show rules have evolved to fit the times, and to make it easier for growers to enter shows and conventions and for judges to judge. Many thanks to Bill Foster, June Swift, Pat Hancock and John Cook for sharing their memories of "the way it used to be."

Fund Reports for May/June 2022

By Randy G. Deutsch and Janet Riemer

Email: fundraising@avsa.org

Anne & Frank Tinari Endowment Fund: \$333

The Anne & Frank Tinari Endowment Fund supports the long-term stability of the Society.

■ **\$300 to \$399**

Jan Houston

■ **Under \$25**

Celia Howe

Joan Wilson

Laura Calascibetta

Claire Ulanoff

Barbara Burde Endowment Fund: \$86

The Barbara Burde Endowment Fund supports the Society's long-term needs in technology.

■ **\$50 to \$99**

Tucson AV Society, Arizona

■ **Under \$25**

Laura Calascibetta, Oak Lawn, IL

Celia Howe, Riverview, FL

Patricia Miklica, San Jose, CA

Joan Wilson, Theresa, WI

Booster Donations: \$1,219

Booster Donations support AVSA's ongoing general expenses.

■ **\$200 to \$299**

Mile High Violet Society, Colorado

(In Memory of Alice Terry Jordan)

■ **\$100 to \$199**

Jan Houston, Champaign, IL

Nancy Moerer, Tulsa, OK

Old Republic Title, South Carolina

Tampa AVS, Florida

(In Memory of Terry Jordan)

■ **\$50 to \$99**

Missouri Valley AV Council, Missouri

Donna Mosher, Grove City, OH

John Novak, Saint Michaels, MD

Rocky Mountain AVS, Colorado

(In Memory of Bonita Hutchison)

Tucson AV Society, Arizona

■ **\$25 to \$49**

Vickie Avery, Lawrence, KS

Linda Garramone, Bay Shore, NY

Phillis Hinkle, Stone Mountain, GA

Carol Hixenbaugh, Green Cove Springs, FL

Robert Kurzynski, Clifton, NJ

Nellie Reese, South Chesterfield, VA

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David Finley, Colleysville, TX

Rich Follett, Strasburg, VA

Christy Grover, Independence, IA

Celia Howe, Riverview, FL

Laura Kurrie, Bel Air, MD

Bonnie Liadlaw, Ravenel, SC

Patricia Miklica, San Jose, CA

Diane Riley, Sheridan, AR

Betty Tillman, Fort Worth, TX

Claire Ulanoff, Nashville, TN

Joan Wilson, Theresa, WI

Boyce Edens Research Fund: \$87

The Boyce Edens Research Fund supports research and scholarships.

■ **Under \$25**

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Jo's Violets, Victoria, TX

Patricia Miklica, San Jose, CA

Missouri Valley AV Council, Missouri

Claire Ulanoff, Nashville, TN

Joan Wilson, Theresa, WI

African Violet Society of America, Inc.

Combined Statement of Financial Position

December 31, 2021

Assets:

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 82,365.68
Investments	299.67
Accounts Receivable	4,179.25
Inventories	4,377.66
Prepaid Expenses	6,400.00
Restricted Assets:	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	104,409.75
Investments	572,957.92
Capital Assets:	
Other Capital Assets, Net of Depreciation	<u>8,154.14</u>

TOTAL ASSETS	<u><u>\$783,144.07</u></u>
--------------	----------------------------

Liabilities:

Accrued Payroll Taxes Payable	\$ 284.22
Sales Taxes Payable	50.93
Deferred Revenue	<u>106,723.36</u>

TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>107,058.51</u>
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Net Assets:

Net Assets With Donor Restrictions	458,323.51
Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions-Designated	153,092.34
Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions	<u>64,669.71</u>
TOTAL NET ASSETS	<u>676,085.56</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	<u><u>\$783,144.07</u></u>

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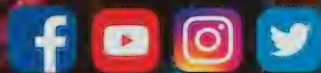


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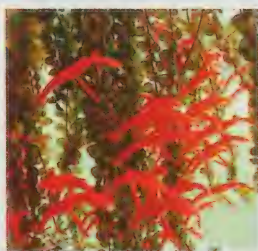
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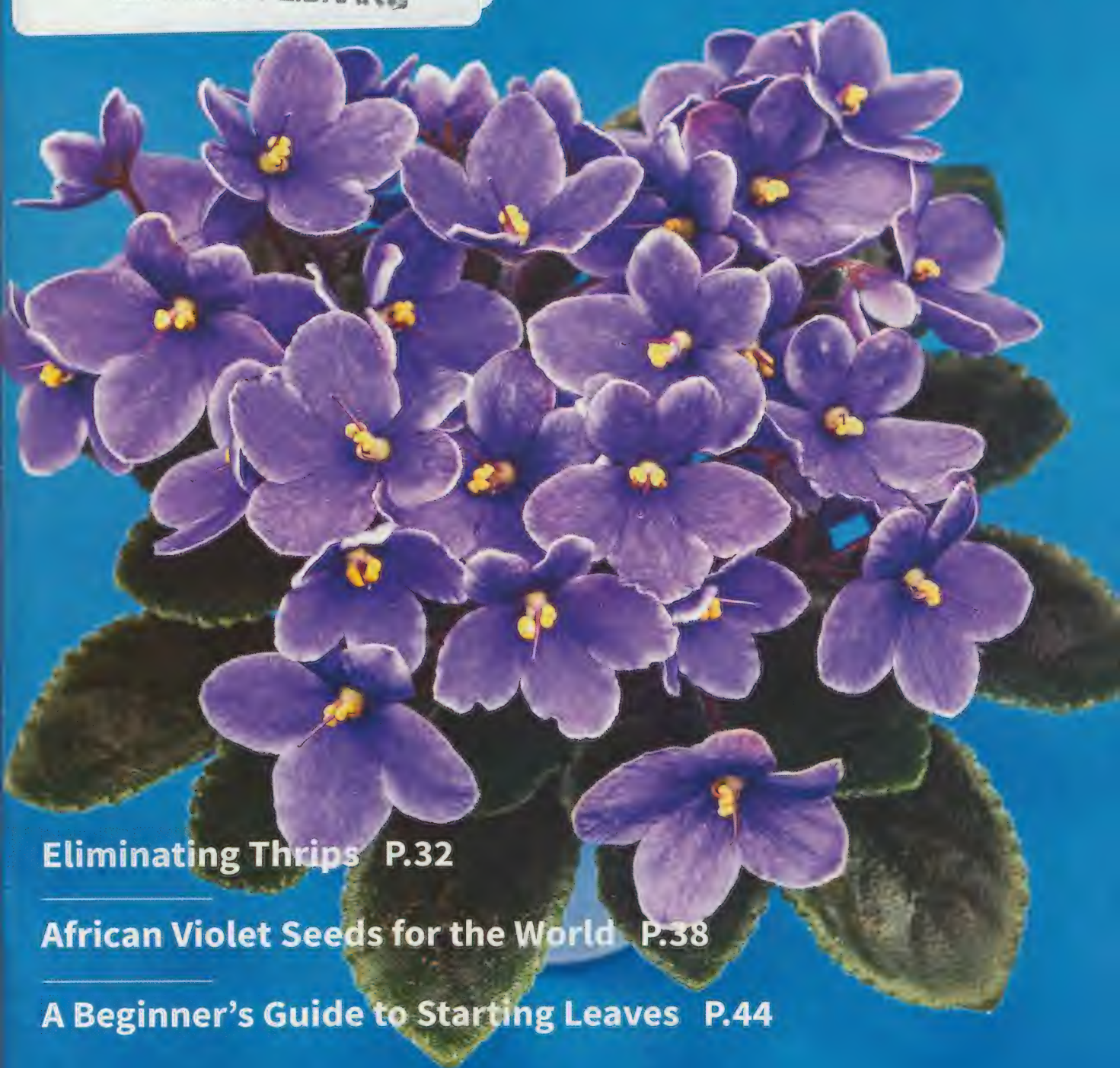
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- **AVSA Office Address:** AVSA, P.O. Box 22417, Beaumont, TX 77720
- **Office Manager:** Amy Carruth (844) 400-AVSA (2872); (409) 839-4725; Fax (409) 839-4329. *Email:* avsa@earthlink.net.
- Hours: Monday–Thursday, 9 a.m.–4 p.m. CT.
- **Official Correspondence:** AVSA Secretary, P.O. Box 22417, Beaumont, TX 77720. *Email:* secretary@avsa.org.

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- **Membership and Promotion Committee:** Send ideas, offers to help and requests for assistance to Stephen Covolo-Hudson. *Email:* memberpromo@avsa.org.
- **Affiliate Committee:** For information on how to organize a chapter, write Jeri Anderson. *Email:* affiliate@avsa.org.

■ Shows and Judges

- **Shows and Judges Committee:** Mary Corondan. *Email:* judges@avsa.org.
- **Show Schedule Approval:** For information on Shows, AVSA Awards and approving schedules, email Susan Anderson at showschedule@avsa.org and attach a copy of your show schedule.
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- **Judges' Duplicate Cards:** Send self-addressed, stamped envelope to Mary Corondan, 434 Plumwood Way, Fairview, TX 75069. *Email:* judges@avsa.org.

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- **Fundraising:** Randy G. Deutsch, Chair. *Email:* fundraising@avsa.org.
- **Funds:** Booster Donations, Boyce Edens Research Fund, The Barbara Burde Endowment Fund, Tinari Endowment Fund.
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■ African Violet Magazine

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- **Articles, Columns and Memorials:** Send to Editor by publication deadline.
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- **Back Issues:** Complete your set now. Request price list of available issues from AVSA Office. Send SASE for list or download from the AVSA Store.

■ International Registrar

- **Plant Registration:** Joe Bruns. *Email:* registration@avsa.org.
- **Master Varieties List (AMVL) & Supplements:** Download from AVSA website or order from AVSA office for \$2. Orders in writing only. Send any correction and/or description of new cultivars with hybridizer's name to: Joe Bruns, Plant Registration (see above).
- **Research:** Send suggested projects for scientific research or names of interested, qualified, potential research personnel to Dr. Jeff Smith. *Email:* jsmith4@bsu.edu.
- **AVSA Scholarship Program:** Dr. Charles Ramser. *Email:* scholarship@avsa.org.

■ AVSA Convention

- **Convention:** Kathy Lahti, Convention Chair. *Email:* convention@avsa.org.
- **Future Dates:** If interested in sponsoring a national convention in your area, contact Convention Chair.
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- **Convention Awards:** Send suggestions to Vickie Crider. *Email:* awards@avsa.org. Send contributions to AVSA Office.
- **Commercial Activities, Sales and Exhibits:** For information on convention entries or sales room, contact Kathy Bell. *Email:* commercials@avsa.org.

Join, renew and learn more at www.africanvioletocietyofamerica.org

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African Violet MAGAZINE

Volume 75 Number 6

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Hybridized by: Holtkamp
Grown by: Linda Sumski
Miniature



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Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.



President's Message

By Susan Anderson

Email: president@avsa.org

The holiday season is upon us, and another year has quickly flown by. It has been a productive year for AVSA.

Events Return

This year, many affiliates have returned to holding in-person meetings and working to promote AVSA and our love of growing African violets. The calendar of events indicates there are many returning to pre-pandemic operations. Plans are well underway for AVSA's convention in Atlanta too. Please mark your calendar and attend a show, sale, display or judging school near you!

Membership Survey

The Membership Committee recently conducted a survey to gain insights on AVSA membership, *African Violet Magazine* and website use. Nearly 20% of AVSA members answered, which is an excellent response rate. A hearty thank you to everyone who participated. Your input and voice matter. The committee is now reviewing and compiling the results. Information from the survey will greatly assist AVSA in establishing our strategic priorities and future endeavors.

AVSA is your society, and knowing the desires of the membership is vital to providing the services and products that matter most. As expected, the survey generated various suggestions, comments and ideas for improving offerings. There were even a few members who made an extra effort and directly volunteered to assist with the ideas they offered. Fantastic. If you have a desire to see a change occur and have the knowledge and skills to make it happen, please contact an AVSA officer, director or committee chair to get involved. AVSA is always in need of skilled volunteers, and we are grateful for their support.

Year-End Giving

Gift giving is easy when you shop the AVSA Store for books, educational media and the 2023 AVSA Calendar. Gifting an AVSA membership to a new violet enthusiast may be a perfect match. Now is the time to place your orders. AVSA's Commercial Members and corporate partners also offer a wide variety of plants, growing supplies and gift options for the horticultural hobbyist.

For online purchases, support AVSA by using AmazonSmile. Register AVSA as your preferred charity and each purchase will result in a percentage donated to AVSA at no additional cost to you.

As you review your end-of-year tax planning, please remember AVSA is a 501(c)3 organization and offers several giving opportunities: Barbara Burde Fund, Booster Fund, Boyce Edens Research Fund and the Tinari Endowment Fund. Donations may be sent to the AVSA office or made online.

Giving Thanks

On behalf of the Executive Committee, a sincere thanks to everyone who makes AVSA so very special. Thanks to the growers and hybridizers of African violets, our source of enjoyment, beauty and peace. Thanks to our wonderful, talented AVSA staff — Amy, Stephanie, Sophia and Shirley — for keeping the office and *AVM* production running smoothly. Thanks to our AVSA Board and committee members for volunteering your time and devoting your leadership skills to better our society. Thanks to you — our members — for growing African violets and sharing your passion for these wonderful plants with your friends, neighbors and family.

Happy growing, showing and sharing!



Editor's Notes

By Sophia Bennett

Email: editor@avsa.org

I get excited about every issue of *African Violet Magazine*, but I'm particularly excited about this one. We have some amazing articles for you to enjoy.

First of all, a huge thank you to Ronn and Katsuko Nadeau for putting together an incredible piece on producing African violet seeds successfully and in quantity (page 38). Ronn and Katsuko have been in the business of producing seeds for decades through their business, Nadeau African Violet Seeds, so they have tremendous knowledge to share. I'm sure this information will come in handy for many of you.

Sandra Skalski wrote a comprehensive beginner's guide to eliminating thrips that will be useful for more experienced growers too (page 32). Joyce Stork has a detailed primer on starting new African violets from leaves (page 44). Read the whole thing; there are a ton of little tips that will make this process more successful.

I'm very grateful to Linda Sumski, who collaborated with me on an article on page 36 that shares tips for growing show-worthy (and perhaps even award-winning) plants. Use her advice and the resources she recommends to start preparing some of your African violets for shows. Although club events have slowed down right now, many groups will be hosting shows soon after 2023 begins. (Not sure which African violets might be good for shows or just to fill out your collection? Check out the annual Best Varieties List and Honor Roll of African Violets, which appear on pages 10 and 12 respectively.)

I'm struck over and over again by the power of community. Many of you likely have a community of your own in the African violet world — maybe through AVSA, a club or a group of friends — or experience community in your church, workplace, neighborhood, online support network or other spot where you gather with people.

African Violet Magazine is created by a community of people who believe in sharing knowledge and giving back to others. I couldn't do this work without their expertise and generosity. I'm particularly grateful to Mary Corondan, your 1st Vice President and my amazing boss; Dale Martens, who intrepidly chairs the Editorial Board; and the rest of the Editorial Board and proofreaders, including Susan Hoffmann, Paul Kroll, Scott Ammann, Jill Jensen and Karen Rooney. I'm also grateful for Shirley Jones, our talented desktop publisher, who continues to help me learn and improve the magazine. Thank you for all that you do.

I hope you'll consider becoming a deeper part of our community by writing an article or growing tip. If you have some skill as a photographer, consider sending photos as well. We would love to publish more pictures of plants, shows and sales, and other events. I've received a lot of questions about photos recently, so as a reminder, we need photographs that are 300 dpi (dots per inch) or larger whenever possible. Photos that are at least 1 megabyte or 1M in size are often fine too.

I hope you have a wonderful time celebrating the holiday season with your family, friends or whoever makes up your community.



AVSA Office Update

By Amy Carruth

Email: avsa@earthlink.net

I hope everyone enjoyed their summer! We are looking forward to cooler temperatures here in Texas.

Most clubs are entering their busy time of year. If you need supplies for your shows and sales, allow for enough time to get your order processed and delivered in time. The mail seems to still be running slow. Please make sure your club's information is up to date on the website as well as with the office.

If your club needs insurance for your meetings and/or shows, email the office at avsa@earthlink.net. In the email, include the name of your club, name and address of the location and the dates. The cost for insurance is \$6 per member and will need to be paid before issuing a certificate. Insurance renewals

for 2023 will be mailed out toward the end of November.

We still have several back issues of *African Violet Magazine* available for the cost of postage. These are great to take to your meetings and shows to pass out to new members and help promote AVSA. Around 25 to 30 magazines can fit in a flat rate box for \$16.10. You can purchase these by contacting the office.

Hopefully, most of you have been able to use our new membership software and have logged into your online account. If you have any trouble logging into your member account, contact the office for assistance. Please do not create a new account if you are already an AVSA member.

Happy growing!

African Violet Magazine Article and Column Deadlines

- January/February issue: November 1
- March/April issue: January 1
- May/June issue: March 1
- July/August issue: May 1
- September/October issue: July 1
- November/December issue: September 1

We would love to hear from you! Please send articles or article ideas for the *AVM* to Sophia Bennett at editor@avsa.org.

Award-Winning Designs from the 2022 AVSA Convention

By Sophia Bennett

Email: editor@avsa.org

We continue our series on winners from this year's AVSA Convention in Little Rock by showcasing several designs. Look for more designs in

the January/February issue. All photos by Winston J. Goretsky.



**Best Design/
Best Interpretive
Flower Arrangement
“Clear Night Sky”**

Exhibited by: Scott Ammann



**2nd Best Design in Show
"Oaklawn"**

Exhibited by: Glenda Williams

**Best Dish Garden/
3rd Best Design in Show/
Best Container Garden
"Hot Springs Natural Park"**

Exhibited by: Diane Buck





Judges Special Award 2
"Pinnacle Mountain State Park"

Exhibited by: Linda Hall

Best Natural Garden
"Mountain Biking"

Exhibited by: Rebecca McMeel





**Best Underwater Design
"The Arkansas River"**

Exhibited by: Fran Russom

**Best Interpretive
Plant Arrangement
"The Old Mill"**

Exhibited by: Scott Ammann



AVSA's Best Varieties List for 2022

By Trudy Brekel

Email: bestvariety@avsa.org

Welcome to AVSA's 2022 Best Varieties List. I want to thank everyone who participated this year. The votes are in and here are the results.

The Best Varieties List helps growers learn about violet varieties that are easy and enjoyable to grow. Hybridizers with several cultivars on the list probably have plenty of other hybrids growers would love to choose from. Read the descriptions and choose your new favorites to try growing.

Voting for the 2023 Best Varieties List will begin in May and close on June 30. To vote for your favorites, use our online voting system or fill out the form on the AVSA website and mail it in. Watch for more voting information in future issues of *African Violet Magazine* and AVSA's *Growing Tips*, as well as on AVSA's social media sites.

1. Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler

- (8745) 07/27/1998 •(P. Hancock)
- Semidouble bright pink ruffled pansy/variable raspberry fantasy; raspberry edge.
- Variegated dark green, cream and pink, plain, glossy/red back. •Large (DAVS 1621).

2. Ness' Crinkle Blue

- (8136) 01/19/1995 •(D. Ness)
- Double dark blue star/variable thin white edge.
- Dark green, quilted, serrated/red back.
- Semiminiature.

3. Buckeye Nostalgia

- (10484) 01/05/2012 •(P. Hancock)
- Semidouble pale blue ruffled pansy.
- Variegated medium green and cream.
- Standard (DAVS 1753).

4. Carolina Elegant Affair

- (10913) 07/31/2017 •(L. Abplanalp)
- Single-semidouble white ruffled star/pink patches.
- Variegated medium green and white, quilted, wavy. •Standard.

5. Frozen in Time

- (9167) 02/03/2003 •(Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses/Sorano)
- Single-semidouble white pansy/variable lavender tinge; green edge.
- Variegated light green and ivory, quilted.
- Standard.

6. Precious Red

- (9724) 01/15/2007 •(H. Pittman)
- Semidouble-double dark red pansy.
- Dark green, plain/red back. •Miniature.

7. Jersey Snow Flakes

- (9820) 12/14/2007 •(R. Kurzynski)
- Single-semidouble white pansy/white sparkle overlay.
- Variegated medium green and white, plain, quilted. •Standard.

8. Picasso

- (6924) 10/04/1988 •(M. Tremblay)
- Double light blue and white/variable white fantasy.
- Variegated medium green, plain/silver-green back. •Large (CA).

9. Rob's Fuddy Duddy

- (7886) 06/02/1993 •(R. Robinson)
- Semidouble dark mauve-purple sticktite pansy.
- Dark green, quilted. •Semiminiature.

10. Rose Bouquet

- (9028) 04/12/2001 •(G.T. Smith)
- Double pink frilled star/darker eye.
- Mosaic variegated medium green, pink and white, plain, quilted. •Standard.

11. Buckeye Seductress

- (9669) 07/13/2006 •(P. Hancock)
- Double dark lavender star/wide white band, green edge.
- Variegated medium green and cream, plain.
- Large (DAVS 1632).

12. Edge of Darkness

- (10677) 03/19/2014 •(Paul Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses)
- Semidouble dark purple star/frilled white edge.
- Variegated dark green and ivory, serrated/red back. •Large.

13. Rob's Vanilla Trail

- (9296) 11/21/2003 •(R. Robinson)
- Double cream to blush white pansy.
- Dark green, quilted, serrated, pointed.
- Semiminiature trailer.

14. Tiger

- (3433) 06/01/1978 •(I. Fredette)
- Semidouble dark blue-violet.
- Variegated. •Large.

15. Kentucky Gooseberries

- (D. Rollins)
- Double white star/light pink blush.
- Medium green, serrated.
- Semiminiature (DAVS 1602).

16. Pixie Blue

- (2598) 09/16/1974 •(L. Lyon)
- Single purple-blue/darker center.
- Plain, ovate. •Miniature trailer.

17. Hunter's Kashmir

- (11227) 07/17/2019 •(K. Muzalewski)
- Semidouble lavender frilled pansy/purple edge.
- Variegated dark green and cream, ruffled.
- Large.

18. Jolly Orchid

- (9719) 01/15/2007 •(H. Pittman)
- Double orchid and white pansy.
- Medium green, plain, quilted.
- Miniature (TX Hyb, DAVS 1661).

19. Rebel's Rose Bud

- (9288) 11/12/2003 •(R. Bann)
- Double light pink two-tone star/ruffled fuchsia edge.
- Variegated dark green and cream, pointed, quilted/red back. •Standard.

20. Rob's Boolaroo

- (8053) 03/05/1994 •(R. Robinson)
- Semidouble light pink sticktite pansy/bright blue fantasy.
- Medium green, quilted. •Semiminiature trailer.

21. Cajun's Coujon

- (10633) 12/07/2013 •(B. Thibodeaux)
- Single pink two-tone pansy/dark raspberry sparkle edge.
- Variegated medium green, cream and pink, quilted. •Large (DAVS 1781).

22. Harbor Blue

- (6174) 02/24/1986 •(T. Weber)
- Single light blue/darker eye.
- Dark green, plain/red back. •Large.

23. The Alps

- (7813) 10/03/1992 •(K. Horikoshi/H. Sawara)
- Single-semidouble chimera white pansy/light blue stripe.
- Medium green, plain, quilted. •Standard.

24. Steffano's Azure Diamonds

- (11157) 03/21/2019 •(S. Covolo)
- Single-semidouble light blue pansy/darker rays and veining on the tips and edges.
- Dark green, plain, quilted, serrated. •Large.

25. Amethyst

- (12) 11/26/1957 •(Armacost & Royston)
- Single red-orchid.
- Heart-shaped, quilted, glossy. •Standard.

Growing Tip

"Having city water, I draw all the water I will need the day before needing it and allow the pails to sit overnight. I know that the chloramines do not evaporate fully, but the chlorine does. I have

had no problems since beginning this practice. I add the fertilizer and SuperThrive to the water just before using it." —Paul Kroll

AVSA Honor Roll of African Violets 2022

By Trudy Brekel

Email: bestvariety@avsa.org

Congratulations to the three winners of this year's Honor Roll. Two are beautiful, variegated standards and the other is a cute miniature trailer.

To be on the Honor Roll of African Violets, a variety must have appeared in the Best Varieties List for three consecutive years. Even the vintage violets are still popular and can get enough votes to make the Honor Roll.

■ 1997

- Ode to Beauty (7677) •(Cox/B.Johnson)
- Picasso (6924) •(M. Tremblay)

■ 1998

- Ness' Crinkle Blue (8136) •(D. Ness)
- International •(B. Johnson)

■ 1999

- Milky Way Trail (7469) •(J.Stahl)
- Ness' Satin Rose (8144) •(D. Ness)

■ 2000

- Powwow (7708) •(K. Stork)
- Rob's Sticky Wicket (6467) •(R. Robinson)

■ 2001

- Windy Day (7719) •(Stork/Boone)

■ 2002

There were no 2002 additions to the Honor Roll

■ 2003

- Rainbow's Quiet Riot •(R. Wasmund)

■ 2004

- Frozen In Time (9167) •(S. Sorano)
- Orchard's Bumble Magnet (8479) •(R. Wilson)

■ 2005

- Rebel's Splatter Kake (8695) •(R. Bann)

■ 2006

There were no 2006 additions to the Honor Roll

■ 2007

- ACA's Red Ember (8732) •(J. Brownlie)

■ 2008

- Blue Dragon (9516) •(L. Lyon Greenhouses/P. Sorano)

■ 2009

- Bob Serbin (8292) •(J. Brownlie)

■ 2010

There were no 2010 additions to the Honor Roll

■ 2011

- Plumberry Glow (9187) •(L. Lyon Greenhouses/P. Sorano)

■ 2012

There were no 2012 additions to the Honor Roll

■ 2013

- Harbor Blue (6174)

■ 2014

- Rob's Chilly Willy (8170) •(R. Robinson)
- Rob's Fuddy Duddy (7886) •(R. Robinson)

■ 2015-2017

There were no additions these years to the Honor Roll

■ 2018

- Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler (8745) •(P. Hancock)
- Buckeye Seductress (9669) •(P. Hancock)
- Precious Red (9724) •(H. Pittman)
- Rob's Boolaroo (8053) •(R. Robinson)

■ 2019

- Jersey Snow Flakes (9820) •(R. Kurzynski)
- Buckeye Nostalgia (10484) •(P. Hancock)
- Jolly Orchid (9719) •(H. Pittman)
- Kentucky Gooseberries •(D. Rollins)

■ 2020

- The Alps (7813) •(K. Horikoshi/H. Sawara)
- Edge of Darkness (10677)
- (Paul Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses)

■ 2021

- Carolina Elegant Affair (10913) •(L. Abplanalp)
- Rob's Vanilla Trail (9296) •(R. Robinson)

■ 2022

- Rose Bouquet (9028) •(G.T. Smith)
- Pixie Blue (2598) •(L. Lyon)
- Hunter's Kashmir •(K. Muzalewski)



Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Buckeye Nostalgia

Hybridized by: P. Hancock
Grown by: Wayne Geeslin
Standard



Shows and Judges

By Mary Corondan

Email: judges@avsa.org

Attention all Master Judges: The year for your continuing education refresher course was sent to you by email or postal mail on August 12. All of you should have received it by now. Renewal dates will be 2023, 2024 or 2025. Those who have not completed their continuing education course by December 31 of the year of their renewal will automatically be moved to Master Judge Emeritus until the refresher course has been taken. Please contact me if you have any questions or have not received a continuing education email or letter.

New judging certificates will not be issued for each Master Judge continuing education course taken. Once the status of Master Judge has been reached, a permanent Master Judge certificate will be awarded. It is the responsibility of the show chair to double check the status of each Master Judge to ensure their certificate is valid and they have not been moved to Master Judge Emeritus status due to failure to take a refresher course. This should be done by accessing the AVSA Judges List on the AVSA website. Instructions to locate the AVSA Judges List on the website are found in the next paragraph.

The AVSA Judges List on the website is being updated monthly. All show chairs should be referring to it when selecting judges for their shows. Although a judge may have a current judging certificate in hand, there will occasionally be a judge who has let their membership lapse. In that case, their name will have been removed from the list. To access the list, go to www.africanvioletsocietyofamerica.org. Click on Member Sign In at the top

of the page. After signing in, go to Member (Only) Content, then Leaders, AVSA Shows and Judges, Judges and finally, Current List of Judges. If you have a question regarding someone on that list, please email me to double check their status. We occasionally make mistakes.

If any judge would like their personal email added to the list, please let me know.

All affiliates will want to be sure their membership is current before submitting a show schedule to the schedule approver. During the past couple years of the pandemic, there are some clubs that have inadvertently allowed their memberships to lapse. Now that most all affiliates are having shows again, affiliate presidents may want to confirm with their treasurer that their AVSA affiliate membership has been kept up to date.

The Teaching Tools Manual is currently being revised to reflect new practices and keep it in tandem with the 2022 *AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges*. The goal is to have this document ready for all AVSA teachers and posted on the website in early 2023. Beginning in 2023, this new Handbook must be used for all AVSA judging schools.

Almost all councils are having a show this fall. It is very refreshing to greet our friends face to face and share our love for violets and other gesneriads with others.



Registration Report

By Joe Brunns

Email: registration@avsa.org

■ Linda Abplanalp — Burlington, NC

Carolina Bodacious

- (11364) 07/29/2022 •(L. Abplanalp)
- Single pink sticktite star/purple fantasy.
- Medium green, plain, pointed/red back.
- Semiminiature trailer

Carolina for Joy

- (11365) 07/29/2022 •(L. Abplanalp)
- Double medium pink frilled star.
- Dark green, ovate, quilted, serrated. •Standard

Carolina Jubilation

- (11366) 07/29/2022 •(L. Abplanalp)
- Single medium blue sticktite star/darker eye.
- Medium green, plain, quilted/red back.
- Semiminiature trailer

Carolina Oh Mama!

- (11367) 07/29/2022 •(L. Abplanalp)
- Semidouble magenta fluted star/variable white edge.
- Variegated medium green, cream and pink, ovate, wavy, serrated. •Standard

Violets Most Wanted List

By Mary Thompson

Email: preservingviolets@avsa.org

The holidays are on their way and the sharing/shipping season has slowed down, if not stopped for the amateur grower. I'm happy to say we have made a few connections this year, and I'm hoping for more next year. If you have a vintage African violet you can share, please fill out the form and send it in. There are so many we are looking for, especially the Original 10. We are desperately looking for Commodore, Mermaid and

Viking. If you have these to share, please contact me. Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas and happy holidays to everyone.

Dab's 'N Splashes

Juicy

Midget Silverfox

Rhapsody Elfriede

Rhapsody Rachel

Comments to Use (and Avoid) When Judging

By Sue Ramser

Email: pastpresident@avsa.org

A number of years ago, we received requests for a listing of some of the favorite or not-so-favorite comments judges place on entry cards. In order to update these comments, we distributed index cards to the North Texas African Violet Judges' Council and judges attending the 2022 AVSA Convention in Little Rock. These cards were also given to members of the Shows and Judges Committee, judging school teachers and judges who attended the Judges' Breakfast. A big Texas thank you to all those who shared some of their favorite and not-so-favorite comments.

The following is an attempt to make suggestions of comments and should not be considered required comments. Some of the comments were made on specific entries in specific shows. Creativity and spontaneity are always encouraged.

When writing comments, make a positive comment first. Then comment constructively on what caused the plant/design to lose points. Constructive comments tell the exhibitor exactly what they needed to do to make the exhibit better. Provide advice but not too much.

One person learned from another judge that when a negative comment needs to be made, one way to express it is as a question. For example: "Would adjusting the leaves into layers have given a more pleasing appearance?"

Negative comments without positive comments should not be used. Take care not to offend the exhibitor. Always remember that judges should exhibit the characteristics of tact and kindness. Also remember this: Be mindful of what you write. It just might come back to haunt you!

With experience, a judge will be able to look at a plant or design and form an appropriate comment without using "canned" comments. For student judges or those struggling to find the right words, these may help. Many comments, both positive and negative, may be found in the new *AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges* and therefore would not be personalized according to the judge's sensitivity or lack thereof.

Design

Positive

- Beautiful, elegant use of color, balance, line
- Creative idea, well expressed in design
- Creative use of plant material enhances scale and rhythm of design.
- Great blossoms, clean materials, container works
- Lovely fresh blooms and other plant material
- The line material is used well.
- Unique interpretation

Constructive

- A stronger line would emphasize your interpretation.
- The accessory in the design should be smaller, as it overwhelms the design.
- Unusual line material, but needs more height to make the design more balanced. Transition material would also help.
- While background material is unique, it distracts from overall beauty of design.
- Would balance be better if empty space was filled more?

Horticulture

Positive

- A lovely plant, with wonderful variegation
- A very nice exhibit, lovely blossoms
- Another year's growth, good potential

- Beautiful foliage
- Good symmetry, good bloom count, lovely foliage
- Great foliage
- Increase bloom count for a blue next time
- Look forward to seeing the plant next year
- Lovely entry
- Lovely head of blooms, clean plant
- Nice clean foliage
- Nice symmetry
- Nice to see this entry in the show
- Outstanding grooming
- Pretty, perky plant!
- Striking blossoms on a well-groomed African violet
- Well grown

Constructive

- A few suggestions for making your plant a blue-ribbon winner: Check the condition of your plant and remove soil, perlite, etc. from leaves.
- Beautiful violet. May want to check fertilizer percentages to address haloing on leaves.
- Excellent beginning. Please continue to grow out your standard violet to 8 inches+ for blue ribbons.
- Good potential
- Grooming should be done regularly
- Please work on symmetry.
- Points were deducted for...
- Removing soil on leaves would enhance beauty.

Negative

- Foliage is uneven and soil shows through the leaves.
- Gappy, needs grooming, not blooming true

Should not be used

- Bad cultural information
- Better left at home
- Design doesn't follow theme of show.
(Note: Comment did not explain why judge didn't understand comment. Judge could mention importance of a Story Card.)
- Flowers pushing leaves
- Green pots — leaves not!
- Immature plant, need to grow to be a big plant.
- Needs to mature
- Not mature enough
- Not sure why you showed this plant

- This plant has so many things wrong with it, it should have been left at home.
- This plant should have been turned.
- Very bad grooming

There is a tendency on the part of judges to wear threadbare such words as excellent, good and poor. Here is a list of words and phrases that would better describe the faults or virtues of an exhibit:

Excellent:

- Reveals clear understanding of design principles
- Recurrent qualities easily discernible
- Undeniable relationships
- Superior
- Remarkable
- Exceedingly good
- Superlative
- A high degree of perfection
- Incomparable
- Masterfully handled
- Superb
- Admirable
- Exquisite
- Free from imperfections
- Gratifyingly rich
- Exceptional
- Elegant
- Splendid
- Distinguished
- Illustrious
- Notable
- Outstanding
- Prominent
- Unequivocal
- Surpassing
- Magnificent
- Flawless
- Extraordinary
- Exceptional merit
- A more comprehensive understanding
- Utmost
- Remarkable degree
- A high order of excellence
- Notably effective
- Dazzlingly dramatic
- Consistent dynamic relationships
- Delightful interweaving of related qualities

- Compels admiration
- Unerring sense of appropriateness
- Deliberately exciting
- Correctly simulates natural growth
- Consistent style and technique

Good:

- Sense of fitness
- Reflects good taste
- Meaningful relationships
- Agreed in purpose
- Well-adjusted
- Agreeably satisfactory
- Pleasant
- Apparent
- Obvious
- Unmistakable
- Evident
- Conform
- Acceptable
- Correct
- Appropriate
- Fair proper
- Accurate
- Definite
- Sufficient
- Adequate
- Attractive
- Unity
- Gratifying
- Competent
- Well-adapted
- Favorable
- Well-qualified
- Skillful
- Suitable
- Effective
- Sound
- Passable
- Commendable
- Comfortable
- Desirable
- Lovely
- Enchanting
- Attractive
- Sufficient strength
- Decided rhythmic flow
- A special consistent quality

- Reasonable relationship
- Consistent style
- Easily discernible
- A unified expression
- Relationship of likeness
- Recurrent qualities
- Sense of rightness
- Well suited to a given purpose

Words to Avoid:

- Conflicting qualities, purposes
- Lacks inherent likeness
- Irrelevant
- Inconsequential materials
- Awkward
- Ill-contrived
- Ill-suited
- Improper
- Inadequate
- Inappropriate
- Misapplied
- Unsuitable
- Inconsistent
- Incompatible
- Imperfect
- Deficient
- Disagreeable
- Unworthy
- Unpleasant
- Inferior
- Defective
- Clumsy
- Ungainly
- Disassociated
- Disorder
- Disconnected
- Disturb
- Confusion
- Displeasing
- Offending
- Unfavorable
- Conflicting
- Artless
- Perplexing
- Meager
- Fault
- Defective
- Unnatural

- Lacking in a certain quality
- Misusage
- Useless
- Unsatisfactory
- Undesirable
- Superficial
- To a certain degree
- Disjointed
- Distention
- Serves no constructive purpose
- Strength dissipated with overelaboration
- Feeling of insecurity
- Loosely knit

The American journalist Isaac Goldberg said, “Diplomacy is to do and say the nastiest things in the nicest way.” There should not be any phrases that offend the exhibitor. Make this a learning experience for the exhibitor.

Poor judgment is a loathsome thing that can never be completely outlawed, for judges cannot be trained to robot efficiency, but we can condemn careless indifference.

REMEMBER: Always start your comments with a positive comment followed by a constructive comment.

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Let's Go to the Library!

By Kurt Jablonski

Email: kurtmjablonskijr@yahoo.com

Greetings, AVSA members! It feels like it has been ages since I have seen my AV family face to face, but accounts received from members of the Library Committee who attended the National Convention in Little Rock report that while the show was on the smaller side, all the exhibits were high quality and they took some beautiful photographs. My hat goes off to those members and volunteers who assisted with the photography of the show. A special thank you to Richard Craft, Marjorie Bullard and Becky McMeel. Without the three of you, we would not have been able to photograph all the beautiful plants and designs in the show.

I so look forward to convention each year and was very disappointed that I was not able to attend, but I will be in Atlanta next year. I hope all AVSA members will try their best to attend, exhibit and volunteer. It is so easy to arrive with show plants, get them entered and then go about all the fun activities that convention has to offer, but I encourage everyone to volunteer in some capacity because without the hardworking volunteers that work behind the scenes, we would not have a convention.

Plans are in place to digitize old convention slides so that AVSA members can take a virtual walk down memory lane and experience those conventions of yesteryear. This is a project that is very near and dear to my heart. It is also a big project because we must convert old slides to digital images, and many are not up to today's quality standards. I ask each of you to please look through your old files, photos and slides and send me an email if you are willing

to share any with us so that we can memorialize past conventions. Once copies are made, the items can be returned to you if requested. I will be happy to pay for postage to and from. Of course, if you have digital images, that is even better, and I can share my Dropbox information for ease of transfer.

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willing to share any
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This is just one project I aim to undertake as Library Chair, but we have many others planned, especially regarding the AVSA YouTube channel. We are always looking for new ideas and advice on how we can improve the Library Committee and have more useful programs and information available to our members, so if you have thoughts, please let us know.



And the Winners Are ...

By Mary Corondan

Email: winners@avsa.org

■ Tampa Bay African Violet Society, FL — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: Tiger, Buckeye Exotic Dancer, Frozen in Time; Best Standard: Buckeye Exotic Dancer; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Mary Lou Harden.**
- 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: LiK-Tanets Flamingo, Ma's Arctic Sky, Rebel's Splatter Kake, **Sandy Soto.**
- Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Dear, Rob's Antique Rose, Rob's Boogie Woogie; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Jolly Dear, **Glenn Shelton.**
- Best Miniature: Imp's Blue Arsenic, **Jim Boyer.**
- Best Gesneriad: *Aeschynanthus humilis*, **Nancy Kast.**
- Best Design, **Pat Rutzke.**

■ Wisconsin Council of African Violet Clubs, WI — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: Hunter's Lightning Strike, Cajun's Insanity, Ma's Hickie; Best AVSA Species Collection: S. 5c2 clone *diplotrichus* Punter #6, S. 5c1 clone *ionanthus*, S. clone Uppsala 3083; Best in Show/Best Species: S. 5c2 clone *diplotrichus* Punter #6; Best Standard: Hunter's Lightning Strike; Best Trailer: Deer Trail; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Kevin Degner.**

- 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: The Alps, Optimara Delaware, Buffalo Hunt; Best Design, **Arlene Garvens.**

- Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jersey Little Devil, Jolly Dear, Ness' Satin Rose; Best Semiminiature: Slow Dancin', **Betsy Fox.**
- Best Miniature: Hunter's Viper, **Jeremy Trost.**
- Best Gesneriad: *Primulina longgangensis*, **Carolyn Lyons.**

The "And the Winners Are..." listing for Wisconsin Council of African Violet Clubs in the September/October *African Violet Magazine* was from a previous year. This year's winners are listed above.

■ Oshkosh Violet Society, WI — Winners: (Correction)

- Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* 'Patina', **Jay VandeBerg.**

■ Richmond African Violet Society, VA — Winners: (Correction)

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: Wild Irish Rose, Maggie Lee, Looking Glass; Best Standard: Maggie Lee, **Vicki Carr.**

Corrections from the September/October 2022 African Violet Magazine

Kathy Lahti, who grew the Optimara Little Pearl that appeared on the September/October 2022 cover, had her name misspelled in the magazine. It is spelled correctly here.

The photograph of the *S. ionanthus* ssp. *ionanthus* v. *ionanthus* on page 6 was incorrectly credited. It was taken by Richard Craft.

We apologize for these errors.

There's Never Been a Better Time to be a Booster

By Randy G. Deutsch

Email: fundraising@avsa.org

Once again, we have arrived at that time of the year when we remind everyone how important it is to help support the African Violet Society of America and ensure our continued growth and stability well into our future. Won't you please consider giving during this appeal month? Donations can be made through our website. Just click on the Donate button. You can also send a donation directly to the office.

A strong society will help all of the members benefit from AVSA's many activities, including education, office personnel, social media, our modern website, support for affiliates and a wonderful national convention each year.

AVSA appreciates your donations so we can keep up with a continued modernization path for the

future. Our booster donations help us maintain the kind of quality society members expect. Through careful planning and giving on a routine basis, we can continue to plan for the future in a responsible way so as to avoid the need for an emergency fund drive.

November is our special month to remind members the year is coming to a rapid end. It's a great time to make those final decisions about things that are important to us before we wrap up another year. Thank you in advance for your support. All donations will be recognized in a future copy of the magazine.

Also, don't forget AVSA in your considerations for Giving Tuesday on November 29 this year too!

Growing Tip

"Miniature and semiminiature babies can be potted up in 2-inch round plastic terracotta pots that are 1.62 inches deep. At the next repotting, use a 2 1/4-inch plastic pot that is 2 1/4 inches

deep. Using this method, miniatures and semiminiatures are being potted up to a slightly larger pot and will grow very quickly." —Mary Corondan

Helpful Judging Hints for Designs

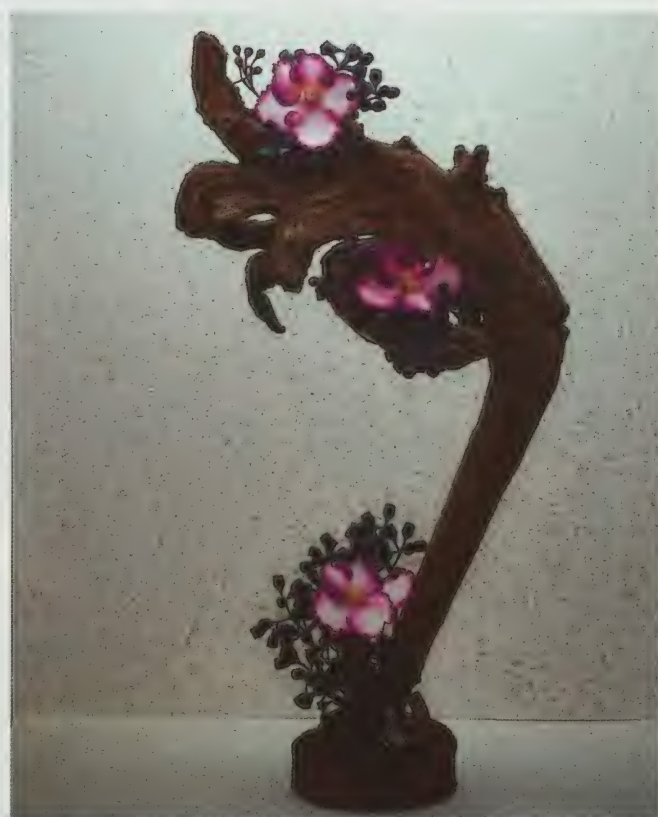
By Glenda Williams

Email: secondvp@avsa.org

Designers are required to provide a 3-inch-by-5-inch card for each design exhibit/entry, containing the division/class name, name of the African violet variety or varieties, and names of all design material used (if known). A second, optional 3-inch-by-5-inch card, commonly referred to as a “Story Card,” provides an interpretation of the exhibitor’s work for judging purposes and the public.

Designers: Story Cards are highly encouraged, as they tell the story or intent of the message you, as the artist, are making with your work. You put a lot of love and effort into your creations. A Story Card is very important to help bridge the connection between your creations and the judges or viewing public. This is your last opportunity to make the connection, which will hopefully result in a winning, blue ribbon entry. It just takes a few minutes to write the story. Start writing and be creative!

Judges: Please take the time and opportunity to read both cards so that you might better connect with the designer. Every designer deserves your undivided attention to their artwork for those precious few minutes when you view it. Open your



“Oaklawn” exhibited by Glenda Williams. Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky.

mind to both the written and visual story and seek out the creativity the designer is presenting with their artwork.



Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Ma's Soiree

Hybridized by: O. Robinson
Grown by: Michael Jackson
Standard



Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Rob's Denim Demon

Hybridized by: R. Robinson
Grown by: Linda Sumski
Semiminiature



Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky

S. 5b clone *grotei* Silvert

Grown by: William Patterson



In Search of New Violets

By Dr. Jeff Smith

Email: jsmith4@bsu.edu

People sometimes ask how many seedlings they should grow out from a cross. My usual answer is, what is their goal with a cross and how much space do they have for seedlings? If the goal involves dominant traits, only a few seedlings might be needed, as dominant traits are expected to be expressed in high numbers in the first generation. Many seedlings will have the trait and only a few are needed to evaluate the success of the cross.

If the goal involves recessive traits, more seedlings might be needed, especially if the parents were both carriers (heterozygous) for the trait. In these cases, only about 25% of the seedlings will show the recessive trait. A larger number of seedlings are needed to find the few that express the trait that is the goal of the cross.

Hybridizers often must be ruthless in evaluating seedlings. Any that have poor growth, lack a strong rosette growth form or have other undesirable characteristics are often culled early to make room for more promising seedlings. Hybridizers often claim the compost bin is their best friend. You must make hard choices on which seedlings are meeting goals and clear out those that don't.

The odds of finding a seedling that meets the goals of the cross can be very low. Sometimes no plants make the cut and none of the offspring are kept for further evaluation. However, finding one or two plants that meet the goals of the cross and show promise of being improvements over current plants are the rewards of hybridizing and further the variety of plants available to hobbyists.

Q: Some of the "yellow" plants have flowers with a yellow center and blue pigmentation

on the edges of the petals. Is there a way to eliminate the blue on the petal edges?

A: It's true that many of the yellow flowers have the yellow pigment in the center of the flowers. Some also develop blue pigment on the edges of the flower. If the petals are ruffled, the blue pigmentation appears on the edges of the petal. It sounds like your goal is to retain the yellow center while removing other pigmentation from the petal edges.

Crossing together plants that show flower closure at night could increase the expression of the trait. However, I would expect that the closure would still be limited to single-petal flowers.

One way that might work is to try using plants such as Optimara My Love or others from this series that have a wide white edge on the petals. This is a dominant trait that prevents any pigmentation from being expressed on the petal edges. If introduced to your breeding program with yellows, it should block any pigmentation on the petal edges. The problem would then be getting the yellow color to express in the center of the flowers.

Another trait that might also work is the older trait of Geneva edges. This dominant trait puts a narrow band of white on the petal edges. The gene is additive, and plants with two copies of the trait have wider white edges than plants with a single copy. However, this trait might not produce a broad enough blocking area for your goal and still allow a narrow band of blue pigment to develop. The resulting flower might have white edges, a band of blue and then a yellow center. This might make for an interesting combination of flower colors if all of the traits can be combined and expressed together and might be worth trying.

Q: I've seen reports of some African violets that have flowers that close at night. Can this trait be selected for through hybridization?

A: The ability to open during the day and close at night appears to be limited to single-petal flowers. It is likely a primitive trait of some sort and isn't seen in many of the species plants. Yes, crossing together plants that show flower closure at night could increase the expression of the trait. However, I would expect that the closure would still be limited to single-petal flowers.

Q: I have been trying to cross modern cultivars back with the wild *S. ionanthus* but have not been having success. Are there other species that might work better?

A: There are very few genetic barriers between any of the species in crossing with each other or when crossing with modern cultivars. I expect your problem is a matter of timing and perhaps some deformation of the flower parts in the modern cultivars.

The stigma at the tip of the pistil of the seed parent matures several days after the flower opens. When receptive, the stigma will spread slightly and look wet or damp. Any pollen applied should stick easily to the stigma. The anther of the stamen should be plump and matures earlier, one to two days after the flower opens. When split, the anther should have visible amounts of powdery pollen. If the anther is wet or mushy on the inside, the pollen has not matured or the anther is sterile. You may have

to try splitting open several anthers to find one with good pollen.

Higher humidity encourages the growth of the pollen tube from the stigma to the ovules in the ovary, improving the chances for fertilization and seed set.

Many modern cultivars with semi-double or double petals are male sterile and do not produce stamens and anthers with viable pollen. The pistil can also be deformed in some cases; therefore, not all flowers are fertile and available for crosses. Check the flower parts carefully when choosing your cultivar plants to use as parents.

If you are not trying for a maternal trait such as leaf variegation, you might find it easier to use the species plant as the pollen parent and the cultivar as the seed parent. Species plants usually have large anthers and pollen harvest is often easier than with cultivar plants.

Another tip is to raise the humidity around the seed parent. Putting the seed plant under a dome often helps. The higher humidity encourages the growth of the pollen tube from the stigma to the ovules in the ovary, improving the chances for fertilization and seed set.

Keep trying your pollination between the species and the cultivars. Sometimes many attempts are needed to get success. Good luck!

Q: In other members of the gesneriad family, such as in *sinningias*, it is possible to have plants with a double calyx where the sepals

have been converted to petals. Does a similar mutation exist for African violets?

A: I have seen plants that have two to three of the sepals changed into extra petals but have not seen a plant where all five sepals are converted into petals. This is evidence that African violets have the potential for the same type of mutation as in sinningias. Keep your eyes open and perhaps you'll find the first example of a plant where all the sepals are converted into petals.

Q: One of my plants recently produced a leaf that branched and produced two leaf blades on the same petiole. Can this trait be selected for or reproduced?

A: Some call the leaf you described a Siamese twin leaf. Others consider this growth a type of zippering. To the best of my knowledge, this growth form cannot be reproduced by leaf cutting or through sexual reproduction. These types of leaves are produced by mistakes in the apical meristem, but the causes appear to be environmental rather than genetic. The traits are spontaneous mutations and not passed on to offspring.



Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Tiptop

Hybridized by: H. Pittman
Grown by: Glenda Williams
Semiminiature



Photo credit: Elena Korshunova

EK-Zshyvaia Raduga

Hybridized by: E. Korshunova

Grown by: Elena Korshunova

Standard



Family Portrait: *Sinningia helleri*

By Mel Grice

Email: melsgrice@gmail.com

Sinningia helleri is one of my favorite gesneriads. The shiny, dark green foliage is attractive by itself, but when paired with the white flowers that emerge from bright red calyces, it immediately attracts your attention. It sort of reminds me of Christmas colors.

S. helleri has an interesting backstory. Seeds collected in Brazil from an unknown plant were sent to Germany for cultivation. The new genus

Sinningia was published in 1825 and was named to honor Wilhelm Sinning. One species, *S. helleri*, was named for Franz Xaver Heller of Würzburg, Germany.

S. helleri was grown in Victorian and Edwardian plant collections, but it eventually died out in cultivation. World Wars I and II were especially hard on horticultural institutions since fuel was needed elsewhere. All attempts to find more



plants in their natural habitat near Rio de Janeiro failed, and the species was considered extinct, both in cultivation and in the wild.

Then, in 2015, a Swiss botanist, Dr. Alain Chautems, decided to crowdsource one last search for the species. He posted a couple of old pictures of *S. helleri* to an online forum for Brazilian plant identification — the botanical equivalent of a missing person flyer. A month later, he received a response from a Brazilian botanist. She realized that a photograph she took in 2008 of an old railway embankment included several plants that resembled *S. helleri*. Returning to the site, she confirmed that they were indeed the missing species.

The embankment was slated to be cleared when the old railroad was converted into a bicycle park. Although endangered species receive legal protection, no one bothers to put extinct species on endangered species lists. The plants were still alive only because clearing had been briefly delayed due to a rock fall. The plants were eventually protected. Seed was collected and distributed to growers in Brazil and the U.S. by Mauro Peixoto. Now, *S. helleri* is widely available and grown by gesneriad enthusiasts all over the world.

I struggled at first to grow *S. helleri*. Plants would grow nicely for a while and then lose their leaves. New leaves would eventually sprout from the top, and I soon had what looked like palm trees growing. The stems became quite elongated.

I studied articles about the plant's natural habitat and decided they grow best for me in lower light areas than the typical sinningia plant. They also seem to like more humidity than I was giving them, so now I grow them under humidity domes.

S. helleri is easily propagated from crown cuttings. I cut off the crown with about a 2-inch stem, dip the cut end in Clonex rooting gel and place it in a Solo cup of potting mix. A new tuber will grow where the Clonex was applied. A new crown will soon grow from the top of the bare stem on the old tuber if you continue to lightly water the original tuber. This process can be repeated several times to “lower” the crown to look more like a typical sinningia plant.

For more details on the discovery and rediscovery of *S. helleri*, see *Gesneriads: The Journal for Gesneriad Growers*, volume 66 (numbers 1 and 2), 2016.

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My First Violets: A Beginner's Guide to Eliminating Thrips

By Sandra Skalski

Email: publications@avsa.org

While admiring the beautiful blossoms on your African violets, you notice some of the flowers have dusty centers. A second look confirms that several blossoms are spilling pollen. A flick of the anthers confirms your fears as the larvae dart across the petals. Tiny terrors have invaded your African violet collection.

Thrips happen to most of us sooner or later, but a thrips infestation can be especially daunting for new growers. Don't panic! Although it may take some work, you can eliminate them.

Thrips are members of the insect order Thysanoptera, characterized by two sets of tiny fringed wings. They are poor flyers, but they can fly and that makes their spread more difficult to control than pests like mites or soil mealybugs. There are more than 5,000 species of thrips, but the species that most often troubles the violet world is *Frankliniella occidentalis*, the western flower thrips (WFT).

What makes thrips so hard to eradicate? First, female thrips can reproduce without male thrips, so even one thrips is bad news. Females make a slit with a serrated organ called an ovipositor and deposit their eggs inside the plant tissue, out of reach of insecticides. The eggs hatch in about three days and progress through two larval stages and two pupa stages before emerging as adults. Thrips larvae may drop down into the soil to pupate. At these non-feeding stages, they are difficult to kill with pesticides. The life cycle from egg to adult takes as little as 21 days and the adults can live for more than a month.

Adults and larvae feed by piercing the plant parts and sucking out the contents. They leave silvery scars across leaves and cause blossoms to fade

quickly. In addition to the feeding damage, WFT can also transmit the Impatiens Necrotic Spot Virus (INSV), an incurable plant disease. Thrips acquire the virus as larvae, and once infected, they carry the virus for life. Non-infected adults cannot acquire the virus, but thrips that are infected as larvae can transmit it for their entire lives. It only takes about five minutes for a thrips to infect a plant while feeding, which means that a single infected thrips can do a lot of damage in a very short amount of time.

Thrips happen to most of us sooner or later. Don't panic! Although it may take some work, you can eliminate them.

How Do You Get Thrips?

It's easier than you think. Thrips infest many of the flowers in your outside gardens and can come into your home on your clothes or even on your pet's fur. They are small enough to slip through the mesh on most screens. The new plants you bought or the plants you entered in a recent show may harbor thrips or their eggs.

You can reduce your chances of getting thrips by taking some simple precautions. Never go straight from your outdoor garden to your indoor garden. Change your clothes and shower first.

Avoid opening windows near your plants; thrips can fit through the smallest openings. Disbud new plants and isolate them away from your main collection. Place a piece of sticky card in the isolation container to monitor for thrips. Disbud and spray show plants after the show. It's a good idea to isolate them as well.

What if you just got some new plants and discover thrips? I recommend that you never bring thrips-infested plants into your home. You may be able to eliminate them, but consider that the person or place you got the plants from probably tried to do just that. Thrips frequently develop resistance to common insecticides. Plus, any plant that has been exposed to thrips has a risk, however small, of being infected with INSV or a similar virus.

How Do You Recognize a Thrips Infestation?

The classic sign that thrips have invaded your plant collection is pollen spills in the blossoms. Gently blow on the blossom and you will see the larvae scurry for cover. Not every pollen spill will be due to thrips. Sometimes, anthers are joined together and they split as the blossom opens. However, if you see spilled pollen, be suspicious, isolate the plant and investigate thoroughly. Poke around the blossoms and check for anything moving. Thrips are only about 1 millimeter in length. Use a good magnifying glass with at least a 50X magnification (I use a lighted model with a 30X and 60X lens).

What if there are no blossoms? Yellow sticky cards provide a good early warning system. I have at least one card hanging on each shelf, and I check them once a week. Thrips are small and easy to miss. A good magnifying glass is a must-have tool.

You Found Thrips — Now What?

The faster you attack the problem, the better your chances for success. Make a plan of action that includes the steps I outline below. Resolve to be thorough and don't take shortcuts or you may find yourself repeating the steps over and over again.

Step 1: Disbud your entire collection

Removing blossoms and buds is painful. That's why you grow African violets, after all. However, you can't eliminate thrips without removing their

favorite food source and the most likely place to find their larvae. You don't want a couple thrips to be able to restart the problem, so starve them of their favorite food and reproductive fuel. The upside is your foliage will grow healthy and strong, as all of the plant's energy will be focused on growing fresh leaves.

If there are any plants in your collection that do not appear healthy, toss them now. Don't risk the spread of a disease for a few plants. If you can't bear to lose them, isolate them from the rest of your collection until you are sure they are healthy. You must continue to disbud your plants for three months. This ensures that the thrips are completely eliminated. Toss the buds and other plant material into a plastic bag, seal it and dispose of it immediately.

Step 2: Spray the entire collection

Spray every plant. Thrips fly, and there is no way you can be sure they didn't get over there even if the problem seems to be just over here. There are several insecticides that are effective against thrips. Here are two that I have used successfully:

- Avid: 1/2 teaspoon per gallon of water
- Conserve: 1/2 teaspoon per gallon of water

A small, hand-held pump sprayer with a fine mist is ideal. Spray thoroughly and get the bottoms of the leaves as well as the tops. If the spray pools in the center of the plant, gently dab it with a natural sponge or damp paper towel.

Whenever you use insecticides, follow the directions on the package. Use personal protective equipment such as gloves and anything else recommended by the manufacturer. Make sure the plants dry out of the sunlight and in a spot where people and pets will not come in contact with the wet product.

Step 3: Put fresh yellow sticky cards on every shelf

New cards reduce the aggravation of figuring out what speck is new and what speck was already there. If you don't know what a thrips looks like on a sticky card, there are many good photos online. They are much smaller than fungus gnats

and most other insects that will land on your cards. Use yellow cards because thrips are much easier to see against the yellow background. Place at least one sticky card per shelf because the more cards, the higher the chance of catching the thrips. Put a tiny piece of paper over any insects you find so you aren't counting the same ones twice.

Step 4: Spray again after about five days

It is important to eliminate adults as quickly as possible so they don't reproduce, so hence, you spray again. You may notice an uptick of adult thrips on the cards after the first spraying. These may be adults the spray missed or that happened to be flying when you sprayed. They are searching for pollen. They should not find any if you disbudded thoroughly.

Step 5: Spray a third time about seven to 10 days later

You will now be catching any larvae that recently hatched and remaining adults. You should be seeing far fewer adults caught on the cards after this spraying.

Step 6: Repot

Repotting will help freshen the plants and remove damaged outer leaves. You will also scrape off the entire top layer of soil (at least an inch or more) so that any pupae may be removed. I discard the scraps from this repotting in a sealed trash bag.

Step 7: Spray a fourth time

This is to catch any recently hatched larvae, nymphs or stray adults. You should stop seeing adults now, so it is important to keep checking those sticky traps and keep disbudding.

Step 8: Lockdown for stubborn cases

Lockdown is the last refuge for stubborn infestations. If you are still finding new thrips despite following all of the above advice, you need to start isolating plants or shelves of plants. You can use domes, baggies and clear Sterilite containers. You want all of your plants isolated, by shelf if possible, with a sticky card in each dome or container. This way, you can figure out if the problem is still widespread or just on a few plants.

The classic sign that thrips have invaded your plant collection is pollen spills in the blossoms.

Trailers can be difficult to clear up because the soil is not as easily scraped off. If you think this may be your problem, take some crowns, restart new plants and discard the remains. Leave a few sticky cards out in the open to catch any stray adults still flying. Remember, adults can live for at least a month. Check the sticky cards in each sealed container or domed tray to see where the infestation remains.

If you find you need to spray again, you must use a different insecticide. It's possible that the insects you are seeing have developed resistance to the one you've been using.

The steps I detailed above should eliminate all but the worst infestations. If you still have thrips, consider that it may be a new infestation or that the thrips may be coming in from outside. Eliminate all the other potential sources of insects before you continue. If people, pets or an open window are a potential source of new thrips, consider moving your plant collection to a different location.

Treating for thrips or any other pest or disease is never fun, but if done correctly, you can eliminate the problem. The extra time you spend grooming your plants should also give them a boost. As you continue to disbud them, remove older, outer leaves and groom for symmetry. Before you know it, you'll have lovely, blooming plants again.

Happy growing!



Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky

**S. 5a clone
grandifolius No. 237**

Grown by: William Patterson



Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Lyon's June Bug

Hybridized by: S. Sorano
Grown by: Linda Sumski
Semiminiature

Growing Show-Worthy African Violets: Advice from Linda Sumski

By Sophia Bennett

Email: editor@avsa.org

Anyone who read through the results from this year's show at the AVSA National Convention would have noticed Linda Sumski's name pop up over and over again. Seeing those results, a person might not guess that Sumski only recently mastered skills such as symmetry and getting her plants to bloom at the correct time, and that her path to being a champion African violet grower wasn't always an easy one.

Sumski first learned about African violets from her aunt Agnes, who displayed beautiful blooming African violets in her basement windows. Sumski bought her first plants from local stores as a young adult but struggled to keep them alive in her apartments.

When she bought her first house, she finally had windows with enough light to grow African violets. A few years after purchasing new plants, three trees in front of her house grew so tall that they blocked the sunlight coming through her windows. "I took what violets I had, stuck them in a Ziploc bag and forgot about them for a few years," Sumski says. "When I finally joined a club, I pulled them out and nursed them back to health. A few of those I still have." (These days, she keeps her plants in a basement growing room with T8 and T12 lights so she doesn't have to worry about variation in sunlight.)

Sumski only joined African violet clubs about 11 years ago, but when she did, she jumped in with both feet. She became the show chair for the Metropolitan Saint Louis African Violet Council almost immediately (something she doesn't recommend for new members who are just learning what shows are about). She also takes care of the show schedule and publicity. She has held

numerous officer positions with the council as well as the Amethyst African Violet Club. She also belongs to Gateway West Gesneriad Society and Missouri Valley African Violet Council.

Sumski maintains a busy showing schedule, exhibiting her plants at events for these organizations as well as at national shows. She used to do designs too, but has since discovered she enjoys hybridizing more, so that has been her focus these past two years. "Hybridizing is like opening up a present," she says. "It's fun to play around and see what the results are. You can kind of get an idea of what seedlings might look like, but you're going to end up with a few surprises."

Here is Sumski's advice for growing show-worthy plants of your own.

Focus on the Plants You Enjoy

Some of the African violets Sumski has tried are known to be good show plants, but they haven't worked for her. For example, her Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler produces beautiful blossoms for her to enjoy, but otherwise she calls her plant a "pitiful specimen."

Her lesson from that: "I only hang onto the plants I enjoy growing or ones I can enter in a show. Just because others say it's a good show plant doesn't mean I can grow it well. If I have to do a lot of work on it because it doesn't like my growing conditions, it's out of there."

Groom Regularly

Grooming is really important, Sumski reports. "A lot of new growers won't remove leaves, repot or disbud. They're scared to death it will prevent blooms." In fact, these are the things that will keep a plant healthy and flowering.

For some of the more drastic grooming measures, like cutting off and restarting crowns, Sumski recommends new growers first practice on plants without any sentimental value. “If it’s a violet that means a lot to you — maybe one you got from your grandma — get a different plant and start with it,” she says.

Know that “the plant has a thirst to survive. Removing part of the plant will not hurt it in the long run,” Sumski says. Removing suckers and older leaves allows the plant to focus its energy on growing bigger and stronger so it can produce more blossoms. Repotting, which disturbs the roots, may also trigger flowering, as the plant may believe it needs to reproduce.

To produce beautiful blooming plants, Sumski recommends following the schedule outlined in Pauline Bartholomew’s “Growing to Show: How to Grow Prize-Winning African Violets” and Kurt Jablonski’s advice in his article “Grooming for Show... Grooming as You Grow,” which was published in the November/December 2016 issue of *African Violet Magazine*.

“If you’re too nervous to follow their advice, especially if it means disbudding, don’t do it on all your plants at once. It’s not too hard to take a few plants on your shelf and follow Kurt’s advice,” she says. “You can enjoy the rest of your plants and do whatever you want. But if you follow his advice, you’ll have at least one plant you can bring to a show.”

Show Plants

Speaking of shows, Sumski believes everyone should enter at least one plant in their local show every year. The discipline of following a regular schedule of repotting, grooming and tending to the flowering of one plant in the beginning may lead

to such care and concern for the whole collection. Plants will be healthier and more beautiful in the long run.



At show time, even if you don’t feel like your plants are show-worthy, pick at least one and enter it. “A few years ago, I entered a S. 5b clone *grotei* Silvert on a whim in our local gesneriad society show and it won third best in show,” she says. “Sometimes people think their plants are not good enough, but then they get to the show, see other plants and realize they had better ones at home. If it’s healthy and blooming, bring it.”

Restart Plants After Shows

African violet shows are a great experience for growers, but they’re also a prime place to pick up insects and other problematic organisms. Sumski takes precautions before introducing plants into her growing room. Before returning home after a show, she disbuds everything. “When I get home from any show, I crown all my violets,” says Sumski. Crowns are dipped in an insecticidal soap bath then restarted in small containers while they are in quarantine. Only then will she introduce plants back into her growing room.

African Violet Seeds for the World

By Ronn and Katsuko Nadeau

Email: Avseeds@yahoo.com

One objective of this article is to describe the difficulties involved in the large-scale production of African violet seeds. The other objective, discussed later in this article, describes methods we have developed to overcome those difficulties. If making AV seeds were easy, we would not be the only people in the world making and selling them to the public and major seed companies. For reference, Photo 1 shows AV flower parts with petals removed.



Photo 1. Reproductive parts of AV flowers, with petals removed. Permission to reprint granted by Dr. David W. Reed, Texas A&M University.

Hybridizing AVs involves taking pollen from the anther of a flower of one variety and transferring it to a stigma of a flower on a different variety. However, because AVs have their pollen inside their yellow anthers, the pollen can only be accessed by breaking through the anthers' yellow coats. In nature, this is done by insects such as thrips that scratch their way through the coat. Since nature is not available, AV hybridizers cut away part of the anther coat to access the pollen and apply it to stigmas. That is a tedious and time-consuming process. For commercial production, efficient methods for that procedure are mandatory.

AV hybridizers need relatively small numbers of seeds for their work compared to an AV seed

producer, like us, who needs hundreds of times more seeds for selling. However, the difficulty in accessing AV pollen is not the worst one. On the male side, most modern AV varieties have pollen that is useless for fertilizing AV flowers; on the female side, most AV varieties do not make pods/seeds, even when pollinated with pollen known to succeed on certain other varieties. And there is another production problem: To be commercially viable, we need crosses that make pods containing 300 to 500 or more seeds per pod.

Based on the information in the above paragraphs, to efficiently produce large amounts of high-quality AV seeds, three things are needed.

- 1) Procedures for efficiently pollinating AV stigmas.
- 2) Good-eggs AV varieties that make large pods containing hundreds of seeds when pollinated with good-pollen AV varieties.
- 3) Good-pollen AV varieties that consistently fertilize good-eggs AV varieties.

These necessities are summarized as follows: Time-efficient pollination + [Good-pollen AV variety X Good-eggs AV variety] = Big pods full of seeds

Because we want happy customers, our good seed producer varieties have DNA that make attractive, nicely growing new plants. We began selling AV seeds in 1977 and still strive to create new and more floriferous good seed producer varieties.

Photo 2 shows the tools we use while pollinating. Photo 3 has Katsuko using tweezers to pull a pair of anthers from a flower on variety Victorian Parasol. In Photo 4, she uses a link from a chain to clamp the tweezers tightly enough to allow her fingers to relax while holding the anthers. Then she uses tweezers and a razor blade (Photo 5) to

slice off some of the anther's coat to expose its pollen, which should be powdery to be effective. If it isn't powdery, she might try an anther from a fresher or a less fresh flower.



Photo 2. Pollination tools: tweezers, razor blade and holding ring.



Photo 3. Removing anthers from Victorian Parasol.



Photo 4. Applying the ring.



Photo 5. Slicing off part of the anther.

Photo 6 shows powdery pollen being applied to the stigma of a pink fantasy flower by touching or dipping the stigma into the opening of the cut anther. That method ensures that the stigma receives plenty of pollen, which is critical for making pods containing plenty of seeds. One pollen grain fertilizes only one egg, which develops into one seed. So, to make plenty of seeds in a pod requires putting plenty of pollen grains on the stigma!



Photo 6. Touching the stigma into the anther.

Finally, the pollinated flower is labeled with a Post-it flag that records the hybridization date and the names of the egg and pollen plants. We currently sell seeds for four different types of AVs: variegated, standard, little gems and fantasy. Thus, it is important to accurately label pollinated flowers as to parentage. Photo 7 shows labeled flower stems post pollination.



Photo 7. Pods labeled with date and names of parents.

If a couple of plants being hybridized are genetically compatible, the pollen is powdery and the stigma is at a receptive stage, a young seed pod will clearly show pregnancy at eight days post pollination. Photo 8 shows average sizes of pods at several stages from pollination day zero to three-plus months (dry, mature pods) post pollination.

With most crosses, the pods are ready for harvest at three-and-a-half months post pollination, but some require up to five months.



Photo 8. Pod sizes at zero days to three-plus months after pollination.

Photo 9 shows a dry, mature pod and the approximately 600 seeds it released. Examination of these under magnification showed most were plump and full size, but some were smaller and fluffy. For selling, it is necessary to separate poor seeds from healthy ones because poor seeds do not germinate. The refinement is called winnowing, as in separating the wheat from the chaff. As indicated in Photo 10, we winnow AV seeds by placing unrefined seeds near the top of a sheet of computer paper and inclining the paper while also shaking it and causing good seeds to roll down for collection below. Poor seeds do not roll well, but good seeds are plump and roll like footballs (Photo 11).

Sowing AV seeds and achieving good germination is not difficult, but you must ensure that the germination mix contains “starter fertilizer.” If a mix does not contain fertilizer, the seeds will germinate, but they will not grow even a millimeter, and you might not know that germination occurred. If you do not know that your mix has fertilizer, use fertilized water to dampen it prior to sowing.

After dampening your mix, add it to a container like one of those in Photo 12. Flatten the sowing surface gently with a spool. Drop the seeds evenly onto the mix surface by placing them on an index card and tapping the card so that the seeds drop onto the surface of the mix. Close the container or enclose the pot in a plastic bag and place it under good light, like the light used over your regular AV plants.



Photo 9. More than 600 seeds from one pod.



Photo 10. Refining raw seeds by winnowing.

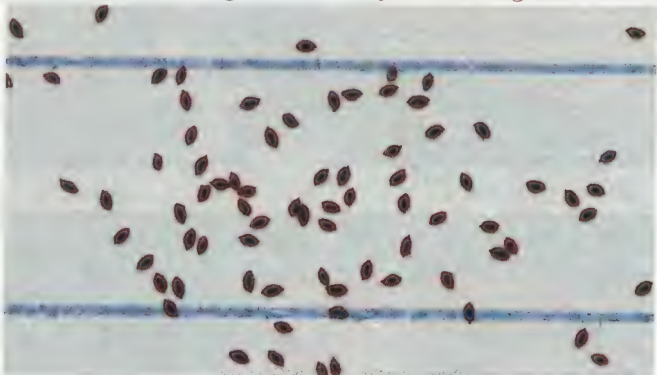


Photo 11. Good seeds roll like footballs.



Photo 12. Sowing container examples.

After a day or two under light, moisture will condense on the inside of the plastic covering. Lack of condensation could mean the mix is not damp enough. If that happens, or if the surface of the mix begins to dry out before the seedlings are transplanted, remove the covering, spray the

surface with water or fertilizer solution, and replace the covering. At 75 degrees F, AV seeds begin germinating at 14 days post sowing. They may germinate earlier if kept at higher temperatures. The seedlings in Photo 13 were shot at 21 days post sow.



Photo 13. Size of seedlings at 21 days post sow. Transplanting seedlings to individual small pots can start at around six to eight weeks post sow or when you feel comfortable handling small seedlings. Photo 14 shows seedlings in a 3 1/2-inch pot. Sowing was on September 17, 2021 and the photo was shot on November 2, 46 days post sow. Twenty-one of those seedlings were readied (Photo 15) for planting in 3-inch pots and were planted, as shown in Photo 16. Transplanting can also wait until the seedlings are bigger, like those in Photos 17 and 18, which are at 84 days post sow. The seedlings shown in Photos 14 to 18 were grown in their 3 1/2-inch pots up to blooming stage, which arrived two to three months later. With freshly transplanted seedlings, it is advisable to cover them with a dome for around a week, but do not leave them covered longer than necessary.



Photo 14. 46-day post-sow seedlings in a 3 1/2-inch pot.

Now you know more about producing AV seeds and turning them into seedlings or selling them. Thank you for reading. Comments and questions are welcomed.



Photo 15. 46-day post-sow seedlings ready for transplanting.



Photo 16. 46-day post-sow seedlings transplanted.



Photo 17. 84-day post-sow seedlings ready for transplanting.



Photo 18. 84-day post-sow seedlings in a 3 1/2-inch pot.



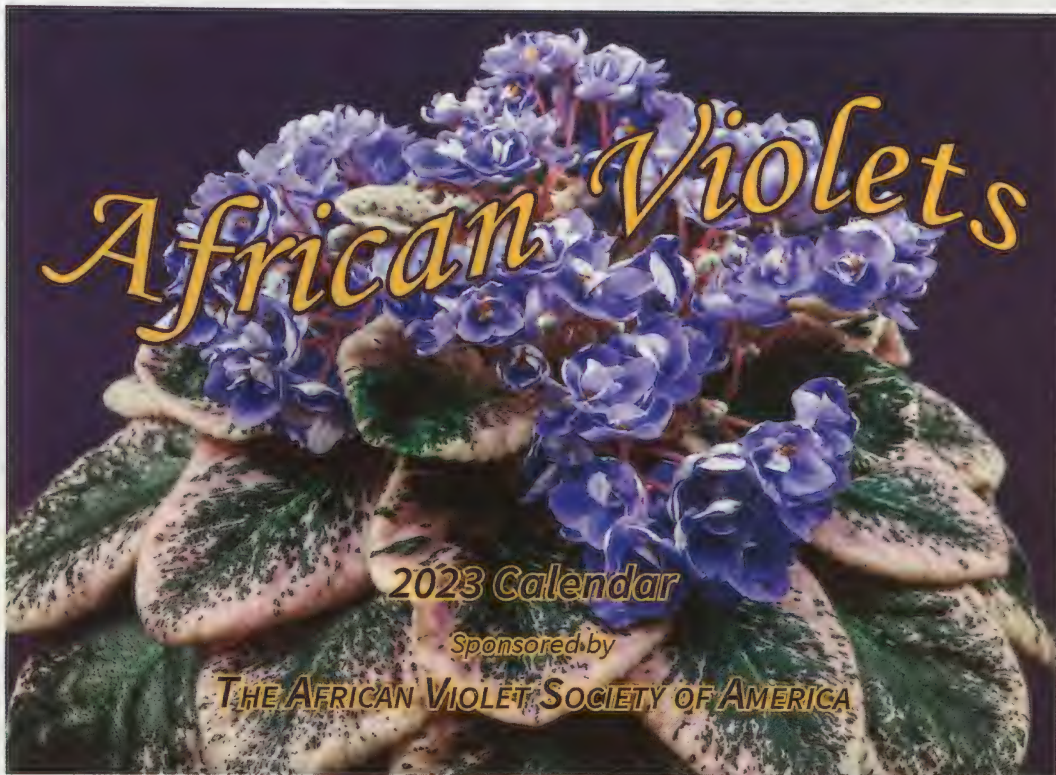
Photo credit: Galina Lazarenko

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Starting African Violets from Leaves

By Joyce Stork

Email: joycestork@avsa.org

Editor's note: This article was originally written by Kent and Joyce Stork and published in the March/April 2002 African Violet Magazine. It was updated by Joyce in September 2022.

Starting an African violet from a leaf cutting opens a new world of enjoyment for many growers. Leaf cuttings will root and grow any time of the year, so long as light is available and the growing space is maintained between 65 and 80 degrees F. You may use a leaf from your own violet or ask a friend to share a leaf of a variety you want to try. Leaf cuttings are commonly sold at violet shows and by mail order. Propagating leaf cuttings is an inexpensive way to increase your collection and have a lot of fun too.

What African Violets Can Be Used?

Cuttings from most African violets will produce plantlets that are exact clones of the parent leaf. However, some violet hybrids will not reproduce true. This is especially true of chimeras, which have flowers with a pinwheel color pattern. They have a unique genetic structure that can only be propagated with suckers or flower peduncles.

Some hybrids have an unstable genetic structure. For example, leaf cuttings of fantasy hybrids (with speckled or streaked flowers) frequently produce some offspring that are not true. Often, these sports have solid-color flowers. These clones should not be shared until you have seen them in bloom.

Some violet hybrids are legally protected by copyright laws. These violets will usually be sold with a plastic stake that identifies the copyright restrictions on that hybrid. It is not legal to propagate leaf cuttings of copyrighted hybrids, except to replace the original plant when necessary.

Be patient. It usually takes a month for a healthy leaf to produce some roots.

Basic Tips

For best results, use only very healthy, mature leaves from the middle rows. Older leaves may rot or take much longer to produce offspring. This is a stressful procedure for the leaves, and vigorous leaves give the best results. Healthy leaves do not need rooting hormone to root quickly.

When propagating a variegated hybrid, select a leaf that is mostly green. Variegation is a stable genetic trait that will be passed to the offspring. A greener leaf, however, will propagate faster. Heavily variegated leaves often rot before any plantlets appear.

Remove the leaf from the plant by toggling it from side to side until it pulls free. If you choose to cut the leaf instead, remove the resulting stub from the mother plant. Avoid pinching or bruising the leaf, as this may lead to rotting.

Next, make an angled cut at the end of the stem, just 1 or 2 inches below the leaf itself. The cut side should face up with the top of the leaf. This will position the future clones to grow straight up and in front of the leaf. If you wish to produce an extra-large crop of clones, slice up the stem about 1/4 inch (so the base of the stem is split).

Be patient. It usually takes a month for a healthy leaf to produce some roots. Once roots are present,

tiny plants will begin to form on cells next to the cut end of the stem. It takes a month or so for those plants to emerge into the light, and several additional months for the plants to grow large enough to be separated. Older, sickly or variegated leaves may take longer. If the leaf remains alive, there is still hope that clones will grow. Leaves root and reproduce fastest at 72 to 80 F.

Be careful to keep the name of the parent plant with the leaf. Violet hobbyists value the names of their plants and will always pay more for a variety that is correctly named. An unnamed violet (sometimes called a no-id or NOID) has little value to collectors and cannot be exhibited in AVSA shows.

Below, we share more specific information about the main two methods for starting leaves. Use the process that works well for you. This may take a bit of experimentation. If you have poor results using one method, try another.

The Water Method of Starting Leaves

Many growers prefer to propagate by setting the leaf stem into water first. Once roots begin to grow, the leaf may be moved into potting mix. Alternatively, the leaf may be left in water until clones are forming.

The container you choose must keep the leaf blade safely above the water while the petiole (the correct name for the stem) is soaking. One old-time gardening expert recommended that a dark, long-necked beer bottle filled with water works well for this. She felt the darkness inside the bottle was good for developing roots and prevented algae growth.

It is more common to use a drinking glass filled with water. Cover the glass with plastic wrap, foil or waxed paper (often secured with a rubber band) and it will be easy to remove the leaf later. A hole poked in the center of the cover allows the stem to be inserted through and into the water below. Be sure to label the leaf with its hybrid name.

The water in the container should be relatively pure, without softening agents or added fertilizer. If water quality is an issue in your area, it might be wise to use bottled water. Change the water

occasionally to prevent cloudiness caused by bacteria or algae. Watch the bottom of the stem for the development of tiny roots.

We recommend that the leaf be transplanted before the roots are 1 inch long. Set the rooted leaf into a small pot of moist, porous potting mix with a high percentage of perlite. Water the leaf lightly, then set it in a bright location out of direct sunlight. This planted leaf may be covered with a clear plastic bag or placed inside a covered container while you wait for the clones to develop and grow.

Some growers prefer to allow the plantlet to develop while the stem remains in water. Surprisingly, clones tolerate being under water for a period of time. Once clones are visible, the leaf cutting, with clones attached, should be placed into moist potting mix and positioned so that the clones are just above the line of the potting mix. The leaf may require the support of a stake to balance it in place until the roots become well established in the mix. Another option is to remove the tiny clone from the cutting and plant it directly into moist potting mix. Either method may require the use of a clear enclosure to provide added humidity and warmth.

The Potting Mix Method

Other growers prefer to place leaf cuttings directly into potting medium, where they remain until the clones are separated. It is an efficient method, but it does not allow you to see the roots and clones as they first form.

Prepare a small pot by filling it with moist, porous potting mix. Growers often choose a peat-based mix with a high percentage of perlite added. Avoid packing down the mix as you fill the pot.

Insert the leaf, leaning it backward so the top surface of the leaf is facing up. For the best results, set the leaf into the potting mix at a shallow depth, no more than an inch. The tiny plants must grow this inch to reach light. They will be weaker if the distance is longer. If the leaf has no stem, trim the bottom of the leaf to a "V" shape and set the cut edge into the mix just enough to support the leaf upright. Be sure the leaf is labeled with its hybrid name.

Next, place the potted leaf into a clear plastic bag or container. We find that zippered plastic bags work well for this but must be tightly sealed. If using a bag, we find that blowing into the bag to puff it up works well. The added carbon dioxide in exhaled breath is good for plant growth, and the sides of the bag will be in less contact with the leaf. This step may be omitted successfully in tropical climates, which have high natural humidity (50 to 60%) and warm temperatures.

Place the potted leaf into a bright location out of direct sunlight. An enclosed leaf will not need additional water if condensed droplets of water are sometimes visible inside the package. If the leaf has not been packaged, it should be watered regularly. There will be no need to move the leaf or change conditions until the clones are large enough to be separated from the parent leaf.

Separating the Clump

It will take several months before a clump of small leaves will be visible at the base of the leaf. This clump usually contains more than just one clone. Each individual clone will have at least two leaves attached to each other, often with a stem and roots below. While it is possible to transplant tiny plants, it is generally best to allow the plants to grow until the leaves are at least the size of a dime before separating the clump. At this larger size, four to six leaves make up the rosette that is developing on each clone. It is easier for a novice to handle larger plantlets, and easier to solve the puzzle of where the individual plants are connected among the tangled leaves. Some leaf cuttings may produce only one or two clones, while others may produce a mass of ten or more. Murphy's Law seems to dictate that when you desire more plants, fewer plants will be produced.

One method for separating the plants is to slip the entire clump and potting mix ball out of the pot and lay it on its side on a work surface. Gently work away the potting mix to expose the stem of

the parent leaf. Then, work the small plants apart from one another. This is challenging to the beginner! The plants are reasonably sturdy, so you can be courageous about pulling them apart. A few torn roots will not impede later growth. The AVSA Violets 101 website page includes several videos showing how to divide a clump.

There are two common mistakes at this point. Some will believe that each tiny leaf is a plant and literally pull the plantlet apart. This is a fatal error. The other mistake is failing to separate the plantlets completely, allowing two or more to be potted together as a single plant. This latter mistake may be corrected later, when it becomes apparent that there is more than one crown competing for space.

Next, prepare the pots into which the clones will be transplanted. If the plantlets are small, a 2-inch pot or even a 1-inch condiment cup with a hole will work well. Fill the pot with moist, porous potting mix and avoid packing it down.

Use the tip of a pencil (or similar tool) to make a space for the plantlet in the very center of the pot, with the stems and leaves above the mix. Just the roots and neck (if there was one) should be below the level of the potting mix. Water each pot until it just drips. Be sure the violet hybrid name is transferred to the new pot.

It may be helpful to place the transplanted clones back into an enclosure for a few weeks to bring them through the shock of transplanting. At this stage, the young plants need indirect light and prefer temperatures of 72 to 80 F. The young clones grow rather quickly and should be capable of blooming in six to eight months.

As each plant grows and matures, it will need a larger pot. Always choose a pot that is a little smaller than the span of the leaves. At full bloom, the plant should be in a pot that is about one-third the diameter of the leaves.

2022 Article Contest—

Sucker Pluckers, By Any Other Name

By Paul Kilroy

Email: onpilgrimage8512@yahoo.com

Question: Who uses tweezers to groom and de-sucker their African violets?

Answer: Nobody (unless you really use those pointy, angled, eyebrow-plucking things usually kept in your medicine cabinet).

Enter: Forceps!

Forceps are passivated stainless steel surgical instruments. The clamping variety has a two-piece scissor-like design which, in surgical procedures, is used as a clamp to occlude or hold things. The other type of forceps are more tweezer-like in construction. Employed with two fingers and one thumb, they are used to manipulate things.

Whether you call them tweezers or not, what most people are really using for grooming their plants is a form of smooth surgical dressing forceps that can be a little too coarse or heavy to use on tighter crowns, minis or microminis. I would like to suggest you explore getting a slender DeBakey forceps (they also come in standard width and chubby). Available online for usually less than \$15,

these atraumatic forceps come in various lengths. I suggest you get them 1 to 3 inches longer than the size you think you may need. They are set with very fine, longitudinal interlocking teeth, and the tips and shafts of slender DeBakey forceps can easily get right down into the crown of a plant to remove the tiniest axillary growth.

For disbudding or removal of older flower stalks without inadvertently snapping off a leaf in the process, it is often easier to do if first you remove the flower head and then pick out the remaining peduncle in a separate step. When grasped firmly with a DeBakey forceps, the teeth will sever the flower stem where you wish to get the blossoms out of your way. Then, a lighter grasp of the forceps on the remainder of the stem will provide good purchase, enabling its removal with a slight tug.

It takes a little practice to learn how to grip lightly to tug and grip more firmly to snip, but once mastered, these forceps from the medical world will have you whizzing through your plant grooming in no time.



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AVSA is non-profit, educational organization dedicated to helping African violet enthusiasts enjoy these beautiful plants.



Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Cajun's Delicate Touch

Hybridized by: B. Thibodeaux
Grown by: Wayne Geeslin
Standard



Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Rob's Outer Orbit

Hybridized by: R. Robinson
Grown by: Linda Sumski
Semiminiature



Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Buckeye Let's Roll

Hybridized by: P. Hancock
Grown by: Michael Jackson
Standard



Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky

***Sinningia* 'Tory'**

Grown by: Mary Corondan

What Was the Inaugural AVSA Convention Like?

By Randy G. Deutsch

Email: fundraising@avsa.org

As we continue to prepare for our next convention in Atlanta, I found myself wondering what it must have been like at that very first convention, held in 1947. With the help of our office manager, Amy Carruth, we were able to access a very interesting article from our archives that showed just what that first convention was like.

Let's go back to that time. As we look at what the atmosphere was like and what the costs were like, try to compare their excitement and budgets to what it will be like next year as we re-create that very first show.

The first announcement said the American African Violet Society, Inc. would hold an annual convention and first national African violet show in Atlanta, Georgia, on October 9 and 10, 1947. I find it interesting that the words used then already inferred that there would be more conventions held in the future. They had already set their goals. The Ansley Hotel in downtown Atlanta was the convention headquarters.

Hotel rates were as follows:

- Single rooms: \$3.50 to \$6 per day
- Double rooms (double bed): \$5 to \$9 per day
- Double rooms (twin bed): \$6 to \$10 per day
- Charge for additional person in a room: \$1.50, \$2 or \$2.50 per day depending upon location. Single beds used, not cots. All rooms with private bath.

Can you just imagine those prices today? What a change from then until now. All included a private bath; isn't that a given now? Most people traveled

to the show by train, using the Pullman services of the Southern Railway.

The first convention had a fee of \$8 that included:

- Registration fee.
- Card of continuous admission to the show.
- Luncheon on October 9, which included a forum with four prominent growers, as well as follow-up questions.
- Dinner on October 9 with well-known writers as guest speakers.
- Luncheon on October 10, which was open to only members of the society, which also served as the election and installation of officers.

On October 9, if any member wanted to bring a nonmember or guest along to the luncheon, there was a cost of \$2 per person. If they wanted to bring someone to the dinner, there was a cost of \$3 per person.

It certainly is interesting to see what life was like back at that first convention. It's fun to look at the prices and what the contents of that first show were like. You can just see ladies and gentlemen with their hats on carrying those wooden boxes of plants onto their train cars. You can still feel the excitement in the air they must have had back then as they assembled for that very first show. Isn't it great that we can still get excited about going to the national convention with all of our boxes of show plants now all these years later?

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Luncheon Auction Results

By Candace Baldwin

Email: auction@avsa.org

The generosity of our AVSA members is humbling. At the 2022 National Convention Luncheon Auction, we had 47 items that ran the gamut of size, from jewelry to plants to a full-size plant stand. There were many very beautiful handmade items like embroidered kitchen towels, a purse, a welcome sign, a quilt, a crocheted shawl and an artist's proof of the new *AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges* cover, just to name a few. If you like reading material, there was a copy of "Almanac of African Violet and Gesneriad World Today" in Russian and English, a cookbook and vintage copies of "Growing to Show," the Master Variety List (MVL) and the first AVSA Handbook. There was AVSA logo clothing,

assorted violet pictures, several violet-adorned china pieces and so much more. The outpouring of donations was heartwarming (and a bit overwhelming for those of you who saw me running back and forth a lot). This year's Luncheon Auction raised a record \$6,000.

To those who donated and those who bid, your generous gifts were all so incredibly thoughtful. I wish there were more that could be done to show appreciation than just saying "thank you." AVSA is filled with amazing, wonderful people who willingly give their time, money and energy.

"May your days be filled with good thoughts, kind people and happy moments." —Anonymous

In Memory

Ruth Tutor

On July 23, the Memphis AVS lost a bright light: Ruth Tutor. Ruth was a woman of deep faith, an amazing nurse and loved by everyone who had the privilege to know her. She loved to sneak up on you and take pictures. She considered your needs more important than hers. You couldn't find a more genuine or precious friend. Her violet club friends meant so much to her. We will greatly miss her and her huge smile.

Steven Spachek

Magic Knight African Violet Society lost a beloved member. Steven Spachek passed away

follow a brief illness on August 13. Steven joined Magic Knight AVS in 2006 and became an avid grower of African violets and other gesneriads. Shortly after joining, he became a Commercial Member and attended numerous Lone Star African Violet Council conventions. As a grower, Steven loved to grow standard African violets and species plants. Steven was always available to provide help when needed and was generous with sharing plants. His laughter, kindness and even his pessimistic attitude will be greatly missed by everyone who knew Steven.



Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Lollipop Kid

Hybridized by: S. Sorano
Grown by: Linda Sumski
Semiminiature



Photo credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Buckeye Lazy Daze

Hybridized by: P. Hancock
Grown by: Michael Jackson
Large

Edema in African Violets

By Joyce Stork

Email: joycestork@avsa.org

Edema (or oedema) is an excessive water-retention condition that affects many plants, including African violets. It is not a disease and the damage is mainly cosmetic.

Simply stated, edema occurs when roots take up water at a time when the leaves cannot expel the excess. This causes plant cells to swell or even blister, usually on the underside of the leaf. Sometimes this is severe enough for cell walls to

stretch or burst, causing collapsed areas to develop between the veins of the leaves. The damage often happens within a few hours. Corky scar tissue may develop afterward.

Two conditions are required for edema to occur:

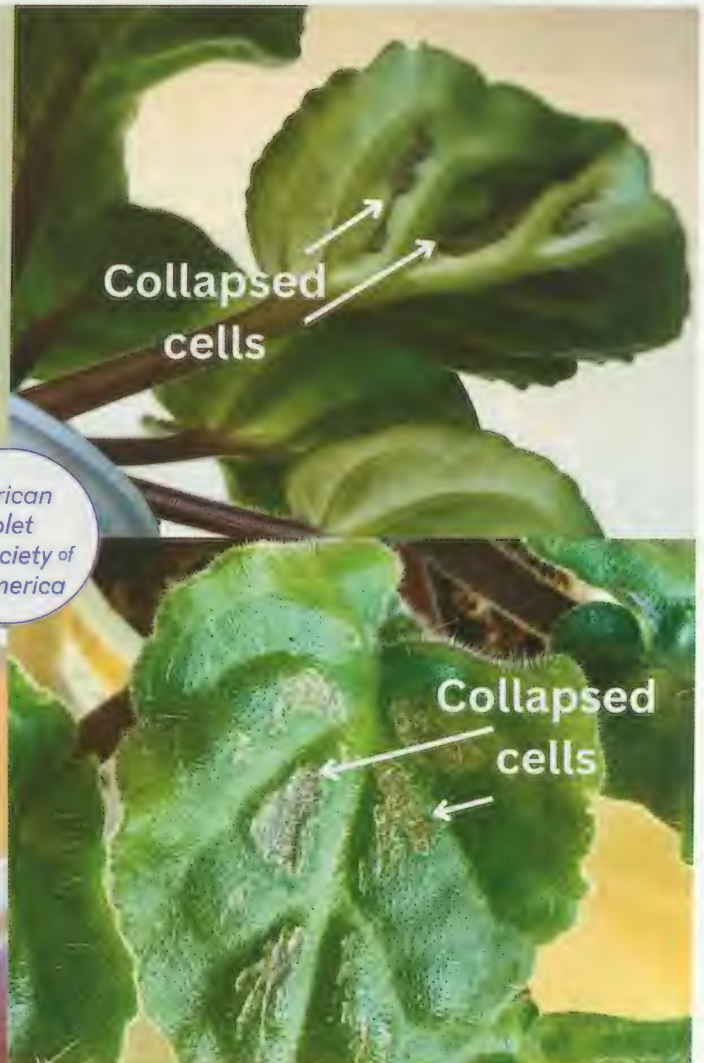
1. The roots must be actively taking up water. Water take-up may be increased when soil is warm and during watering.

EDEMA

Abnormal retention of fluid in plant tissues causing cells to swell, blister, and finally collapse



Photo Credit: Elvira Moraes



2. Something must be limiting the evaporation of air from the plant. Normally, plants give off water during transpiration, mostly during photosynthesis. This happens as water evaporates from stomata on the underside of leaves. Photosynthesis and most transpiration cease during dark hours. High humidity also reduces evaporation from the plant. Similarly, cooling air (which raises the relative humidity) limits evaporation.

Prime conditions for edema occur when warm, moist potting mix and cool air (with high relative humidity) are combined with darkness. The warm roots absorb water more freely. The cool, humid air limits transpiration. Reduced light or darkness slows photosynthesis and transpiration. The cells fill up with water with no ability to release it.

Extreme weather conditions are often involved, such as unusually hot weather or a very hot day followed by a very cool night. Hot air absorbs large amounts of water during the day. As the air temperature drops at night, relative humidity increases dramatically. But potting mix changes temperature more slowly than air. It stays warm. If a grower adds extra water late in the day (because plants dried out during the hot day), edema is particularly likely to occur.

Most growers with well-controlled cultural conditions will rarely experience edema. This means carefully monitoring soil moisture, using porous

potting medium and maintaining temperature and humidity levels. But watch out for that rare weather system with temperature extremes. If plants have wilted slightly on an unusually hot day, wait for the morning to add water.

If a grower adds extra water late in the day (because plants dried out during the hot day), edema is particularly likely to occur.

Edema damage may be unpredictable. Some hybrids are more vulnerable to edema than others. The cells on the undersides of the leaves are often the most vulnerable. On the other hand, edema is almost always limited to the older leaves. Tender young leaves seem to be less vulnerable. This means that edema will damage some leaves but will not kill the plant. Growers should simply groom off the damaged leaves over a period of weeks and allow the center of the crown to grow out again.

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Fusarium

By Cindy Fortin

Email: cfquilt@comcast.net

Fusarium: a word that will send shivers down your spine if you are a grower of gesneriads or any plant. I had a streptocarpus that had brownish-purple coloring on the outer part of the leaves. I posted a picture on Facebook looking for answers and received quite a few. All were different and none of them were right. I sent the leaf off to the UNH Diagnostic lab for testing. I got my results saying that it had Fusarium.

Fusarium is a soil-borne pathogen typically caused by warm weather and water-logged growing media. It starts in the soil and enters the root system. Once there, it interferes with the water-conducting vessels of the plant. This results in limited water uptake to the leaves and stems. If not caught early, it will result in the plant dying.



I couldn't believe it. How could this happen?! The woman from the UNH lab said that Fusarium is in all soil, and she didn't think I should toss my collection. It can be caused by overwatering or overfertilizing. I didn't think I was doing either. I wick and use MSU fertilizer (also called Michigan State University's magic fertilizer) with reverse osmosis water. She also said that some genetics of African violets make them more susceptible. Another recommendation she made was to let my plants dry out in between watering, but how do you do that when you wick water?

I started reading as much as I could about Fusarium. A lot of the articles did say that if caught early, it can be treated. Otherwise, it is deadly. The next day, I went to a hydroponic store to get what I could to start treatment. The young man in the store was really helpful. He had had Fusarium on his tomato plants and was successful with treatment. He sold me a product called PureCrop1. He also gave me another product, a powder that I mixed in water to treat the roots.

I knew the streps were not going to like being stripped down to their roots, but I didn't care. I was going to do what I thought was necessary to hopefully save my collection. I also decided to decapitate my African violets to save them. You have to bag and dispose of the old soil so Fusarium doesn't spread. The pots would be cleaned in a hot water and bleach solution. I went through my plants before I started treatment and purged a lot of them. I repotted every one I thought would survive. I didn't get all the soil off the streps. They were too wet when I pulled them from the pots. Now, they are domed and don't seem to be sad.

Now, I wait and see if this was worth the work. I will continue to treat with fungicides. The product PureCrop1 is also good for treating some of the many bugs that plague African violets. I had been fighting gnats. In one of the articles I read, it did

say that gnats will spread diseases on their feet. I wonder if that is what happened to me. It's an unfortunate way to reduce your collection. I will get through the winter and hopefully be able to ramp up again in the spring.

Fund Reports for July/August 2022

By Randy G. Deutsch and Janet Riemer

Email: fundraising@avsa.org

Anne & Frank Tinari Endowment Fund: \$73

The Anne & Frank Tinari Endowment Fund supports the long-term stability of the Society.

\$25 to \$49

Glitter Gulch African Violet Growers, Nevada
AVS of Springfield, Pennsylvania

Under \$25

Betsy Branson, Sellersville, PA
Derald L. Richards, Jr., Vancouver, WA
Joanna Inferrera, Hammonton, NJ

Barbara Burde Endowment Fund: \$578

The Barbara Burde Endowment Fund supports the Society's long-term needs in technology.

\$500 to \$599

Lynn Allen, Bloomfield, MI

\$50 to \$99

Joan Wood, Torrance, CA

\$25 to \$49

Laura Campbell, Camarillo, CA

Under \$25

Derald L. Richards, Jr., Vancouver, WA

Booster Donations: \$320

Booster Donations support AVSA's ongoing general expenses.

\$100 to \$199

Memphis AVS, Tennessee
Dorothy Meyer, Dubois, IN

\$25 to \$49

Glitter Gulch AV Growers, Nevada
Sylvia Row, Redwood City, CA

Under \$25

Brenda Dutta, Basking Ridge, NJ
Margaret Goodwin, Mansfield, TX
Ann Lyle, Annandale, VA
John Patterson, Hagerstown, MD
Derald L. Richards, Jr., Vancouver, WA
Catherine Scheiman, Tucson, AZ
Darren Wicks, Scot Vale, Australia

Boyce Edens Research Fund: \$198

The Boyce Edens Research Fund supports research and scholarships.

\$100 to \$199

Jeanette Woloszyn, Seaford, NY

\$50 to \$99

Jeffrey Smith, Muncie, IN

Under \$25

Jean Corkill, Prunedale, CA
Mark Czarnota, Williamson, GA
Derald L. Richards, Jr., Vancouver, WA



AV Creative Corner: \$20 Shopping Challenge

By Rich Follett

Email: avcreativecorner@gmail.com

The end of the year has arrived — traditionally, a time when token gifts come in handy. Friends are always delighted to be thought of (at this time of year in particular), and a small gesture can go a long way, especially for those without a wide circle of friends and family to remember them amidst the hustle and bustle between Black Friday and the new year. Our AV club has sometimes organized a thieves' gift exchange, where members bring inexpensive gifts and draw numbers to see what order they will go in to "steal" each other's goodies. Or, you might just have someone you'd like to remember without breaking the bank.

I took it upon myself to go to our local discount store with \$20 in my pocket to see how many useful and/or attractive objects I could find to make up a sort of African violet grab bag, and I was really surprised at how much I found and how far my money went. After I got home, I thought how interesting it would be to issue the \$20 challenge to *AVM* readers and see what they might find in their own locales. Take a photo of what you find, make a list of what each item is to be used for and e-mail both to avcreativecorner@gmail.com by January 1 for possible publication in a future *AVM* issue!

Here are the basic rules of the challenge, followed by a labeled picture of my own discoveries and a corresponding list.

Rule 1: You may not spend more than \$20, tax included.

Rule 2: All items must be purchased from the same store/business.

Rule 3: Identifying marks (those which would amount to promotion for a particular store or business) must not be visible in your photo, and

the store/business cannot be named in any accompanying text.

I hope you will all have fun with this challenge. I look forward to seeing the results of your own forays.

Items in the Picture

- 1: Purple gift box: ideal for gifting special AV trinkets
- 2: Crafter's pick: excellent for dislodging a piece of perlite from between delicate leaf stems
- 3: Seed starter: pure, finely sifted peat with just a touch of perlite and vermiculite
- 4: Bell dome: marvelous for growing/isolating micro-minis or starting leaves
- 5: Mini spray bottle
- 6: Mini Solo cups: fantastic for leaf starts or baby plants



- 7: A pair of mini soil scoops (they are even the right color!)
- 8: 2 1/2-inch roll-top pots: just right for semiminis or small standards
- 9: Plastic candy jar with lid: isolate new plants or increase humidity for minis/babies
- 10: Cake taker: tailor-made for isolating new plants or as a nursery container
- 11: Hanging plastic terrarium: perfect for increasing humidity/extending growing space
- 12: Floral tape: design your heart out!

13: Purple Mardi Gras beads: enchanting party favors or for design

14: Bead bags: for leaf trades

15: Permanent markers: for labeling pots, leaf bags, etc.

If you have any ideas for future Creative Corner features, please send them to avcreativecorner@gmail.com. I am always eager to hear about new ways to express creativity. A byline will be given for all suggestions and submissions appearing in this column.

“Perfectly Pittman” Video

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Jolly Orchid

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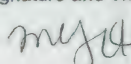
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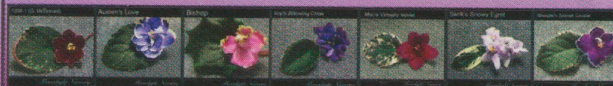
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